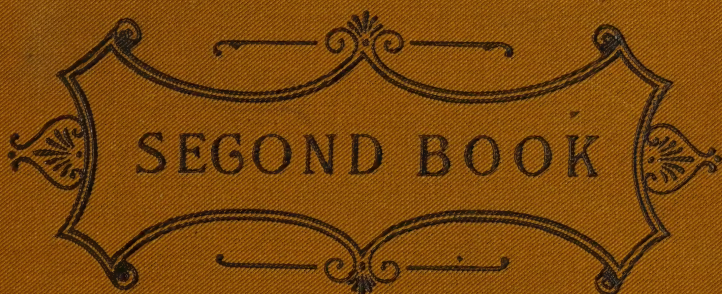


VICTORIAN READERS.



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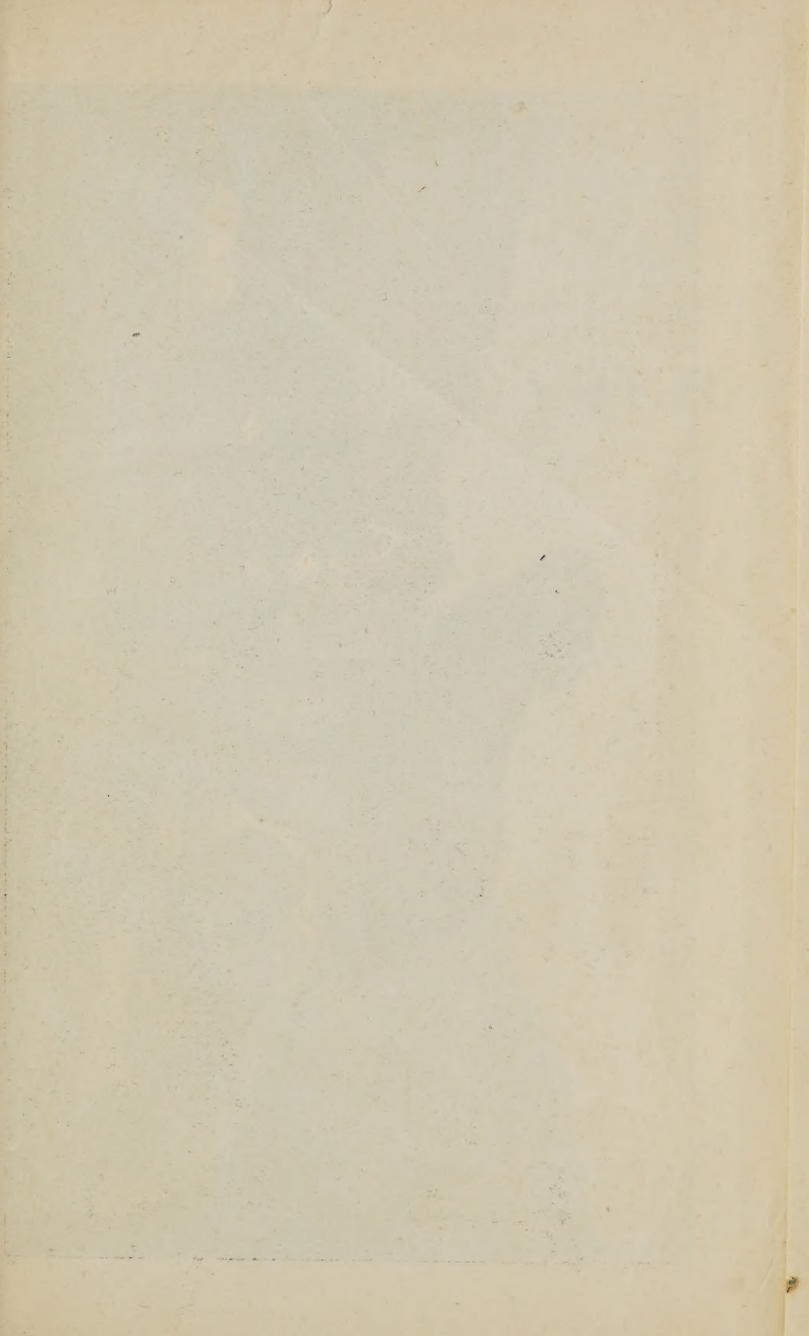
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JOHN H. JOHNSON
NEW YORK

The Victorian Readers.

SECOND READER.

*AUTHORIZED BY THE ADVISORY BOARD
FOR MANITOBA.*



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SECOND READER.

MARCH.

In the snowing and the blowing,
In the cruel sleet,
Little flowers begin their growing
Far beneath our feet.

Softly taps the Spring, and cheerly,—
“Darlings, are you here?”
Till they answer, “We are nearly,
Nearly ready, dear.”

“Where is Winter, with his snowing?
Tell us, Spring,” they say.
Then she answers, “He is going,
Going on his way.”

“Poor old Winter does not love you;
But his time is past;
Soon my birds shall sing above you;—
Set you free at last.”

THE PIED PIPER.

Would you hear a story of the long, long ago ? It may not be altogether true, but it has been told so often, that we seem to think it true.

The little village of Newtown was sadly troubled with rats. There wasn't a barn or a stable, a store-room or cupboard but they ate their way into it. The bread and the cheese, the fruit and the vegetables, all disappeared. And in addition to all this, the rats kept up such a scratching and squeaking, that the poor people couldn't get half their sleep.

They tried cats, but the rats chased them away. They tried poison, but it nearly brought on a plague when so many rats died. They tried traps, but it was of no use. Every day seemed to bring a fresh army of the little pests.

The mayor and the council were at their wits' end. They had almost decided that the best thing to be done was for everybody to leave the village. Just then there came along the most peculiar looking fellow you ever saw. He was tall and thin, and had keen piercing eyes. But the funny thing about him was his coat. It was made of patches of cloth of all colors. His hat was no better. Even his trousers and his stockings were of the same kind.



PIED PIPER.

“I am the Pied Piper,” he said, addressing the mayor. “And what will you pay me, if I rid you of every rat in Newtown?”

Now the mayor and the council were only too eager to get rid of the rats, but they did not like to give out their money. So they higgled and haggled until the Piper grew impatient and said, “Give me fifty pounds, or that is the end of it.” So they promised the money as soon as not a rat was to be found in Newtown.

Then the Piper walked out into the street and placed a pipe to his lips. He played such a shrill keen tune that it was heard in every house in the village. It sounded as if thousands of rats were squeaking at once.

Then there was a strange sight. Out of every hole the rats came running and tumbling. Old rats and young rats, big lean ones and little fat ones, crowded after the Piper and followed him down the street. Every few yards he would stand and give an extra flourish on his pipe, so that the little rats would have time to catch up to the older ones.

Up Silver Street he went and down Gold Street, and then he took a boat and sailed out into the deep sea. Still he kept playing his pipe and all the rats followed him, splashing and paddling and wagging their tails with delight.

On and on he sailed, and the rats followed him. One by one they sank in the waves, until every rat of them was drowned in the deep sea.

Then the Piper rowed back to shore, but not a rat followed him. Nor could a single rat be found in all the village.

Then the mayor and council began to shake their heads, and to "hum!" and "haw!" For where was the fifty pounds to come from? And wasn't fifty pounds too much for the work of a few minutes? Think of it! Fifty pounds for just sitting in a boat and playing a tune on the pipe! It was ridiculous. So they said to the Piper, "Fifty pounds is too much—far too much. Will you not take twenty? Surely that is good pay for your work."

But the Piper replied, "Fifty pounds is what you promised, and you had better pay it quickly, for I can play other tunes as well." Then the mayor grew angry, and ordered him out of the village.

"Very well," said the Piper, smiling. "Just as you wish." So he placed his pipe to his lips again, and began playing as before. But this time it was not shrill keen notes; it was the sound of play and laughter.

Then out of their homes, and the schoolrooms, and from the playgrounds, ran all the children,

laughing and shouting, and they followed the Pied Piper down the long street. On they went, dancing and skipping, and joining hands. Down Gold Street and down Silver Street they went, and on into the cool, green forest, with its great oak trees, and wide-spreading beeches. On went the Piper with his many-colored coat, and the children followed, until their voices grew faint, and died away in the distance.

All the while the old folks watched and waited. But the Piper never came back, nor were the voices of the children ever heard again in the streets.

People say that both Piper and children went to another land, where there were no rats and no greedy mayor, and that they danced and sang all the day, and never grew tired, and never felt sad.

SUMMER AND WINTER.

What are the bright eyes watching
Under the Southern sun?
Oh, the roses fair in the balmy air,
And the vines that climb and run.

What are the bright eyes watching
Under the Northern sky ?
Feathery snow, while the chill winds blow,
And the clouds go drifting by.

What are the children doing
Alike in the cold and the heat ?
They are making life gay on the darkest day,
With the sound of their little feet.

What are the children learning
Alike in the East and the West ?
That a Father's hand is o'er sea and land—
That of all things, Love is best.

THE CATS THAT WENT TO LAW.

Did you ever hear the fable of the cats that went to law ? It seems they stole a piece of cheese and began to dispute as to how it should be divided. When they found they could not agree, they decided to bring the matter before the monkey, who should act as judge.

Now the monkey was wise and fair. He took a pair of scales, and placed a part of the cheese in each pan.

“Let me see !” he began. “This piece is too large.” So he bit off a good mouthful to make the shares equal.

“Ah!” he said, “now the other piece is too large.” Then he took another bite, and weighed once more. Still the shares were not equal.

“Stop! stop!” said the cats, who now saw how things were going. “Give each of us a piece and we shall be satisfied.”

“Oh, no!” said the monkey, “we must be just. The law is always just.” So he kept on nibbling, till the cheese was nearly all gone.

Then the cats begged him to take no further trouble. “Trouble!” said the monkey, “I am glad you mentioned it, for that reminds me, I must have some pay for my trouble.” And with that he crammed all that remained into his mouth, and broke up the court.

BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

Beautiful faces are they that wear
The light of a pleasant spirit there;
It matters little if dark or fair.

Beautiful hands are they that do
Deeds that are noble, good, and true;
Busy with them the long day through.

Beautiful feet are they that go
Swiftly to lighten another's woe,
Through summer's heat or winter's snow.

THE LARK AND THE FARMER.

A FABLE.

A lark once made her nest in a field of hay. It was an early summer, and she was afraid that the mowers would come to cut the hay before her young ones were able to fly to a place of safety. When she went away to look for food, she told her little ones to remember everything they heard the farmer say, and to tell her on her return.

When she was gone, the young larks heard the farmer say to his son, "I think this hay is ripe enough. Go to-morrow morning and ask our friends and neighbors to come and help us to cut it down."

Soon afterwards the mother-lark came back. Her little ones chirped round her, and told her what the farmer had said, and asked her to remove them to a place of safety before the mowers came.

Their mother replied, "Fear not; for if the farmer depends on his friends and neighbors, I am sure the hay will not be cut to-morrow."

Next day she went out again to seek for food, and left the same orders as before. The farmer

came and waited, looking for his friends and neighbors; but the sun rose high in the sky, and still nothing was done, for no one came to help him.

Then the farmer said to his son, "These friends and neighbors of ours have not come to help us. Go to your uncles and cousins, and ask them to come early to-morrow morning and help us to mow our hay."

The son went away and did so, and the young larks were in a great fright. They told this also to their mother.

"If that is all," said she, "do not be frightened, dears; for uncles and cousins are not always very ready to help one another. But be sure to listen again to-morrow, and tell me what you hear."

Next day she flew away as usual for food. The farmer came down to the field with his son, but neither uncles nor cousins were there to meet him. So he said, "Well, George, have two good scythes ready to-morrow morning, and we will cut down the hay ourselves!"

When the mother-lark was told this, she said, "Now it is time for us to be gone; for when a man does his own work himself, he is not likely to fail."

So saying, she and her young ones flew away to another field, and the hay was cut next day by the farmer and his son. They had learned what the lark knew already, that work is best and most quickly done when people help themselves.

THE LARK'S SONG.

A lark flew up from its dewy nest
Beside a meadow daisy,
And, swelling its throat, sang loud and clear,
As if with joy 'twere crazy.
“Wake up! wake up!” were the words it sang;
“The world is growing lazy.

“In through yon window I peep and see
A maiden soundly sleeping.
Wake up, little girl! don't wait for the sun
To begin his tardy creeping;
Lest for unlearned lessons and tasks undone
At eve you may be weeping.”

HARK! HARK! THE LARK.

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chalic'd flowers that lies;

And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes ;
With every thing that pretty bin :
My lady sweet, arise ;
Arise, arise !

THE BROOK.

From a fountain,
In a mountain,
Drops of water ran.
Trickling through the grasses ;
So the brook began.

Slow it started ;
Soon it darted,
Cool and clear and free,
Rippling over pebbles,
Hurrying to the sea.

Children straying
Came a-playing
On its pretty banks ;
Glad, our little brooklet
Sparkled up its thanks.

Blossoms floating
Mimic boating,
Fishes darting past,
Swift and strong and happy,
Widening very fast.

Bubbling, singing,
Rushing, ringing,
Flecked with shade and sun,
Soon our little brooklet
To the sea has run.

THE WOODMAN'S AXE.

Once upon a time an honest woodman lived with his wife and children in a small house in the woods. He was very poor,—so poor that he had to work from early morning until late in the evening in order to keep his family from starving. They, too, worked with all their might, but still they were very poor.

One day as the woodman was working on the bank of a stream, his axe slipped from his hands and fell into the water. “Ah, me!” he cried; “it was very hard to get my living with my axe, but what shall I do now that it is gone?” And he hid his face in his hands, and groaned aloud.

Then he was aware of a bright light, and he heard a sweet voice that said, “Look up, my friend; why do you mourn so bitterly?”

“I have lost my axe,” said the woodman; “my axe that I loved as a brother. Where shall I find another?”

Now you must know that it was the water-fairy who spoke to the woodman. No sooner had he finished his speech than the fairy was gone. Down she went to the bottom of the river, but immediately returned, bearing in her hand an axe of gold.

"Is this your axe?" she asked. But the woodman shook his head. "No, no! My axe was not so fine as that. That would buy mine a thousand times over; but it is not mine, it is not mine."

Then the fairy sank beneath the water again. In a moment she re-appeared, bearing a silver axe. "Is this yours?" she asked again. "No, no!" said the woodman; "that is much finer than mine. Mine was made of iron."

Then the fairy went down once more, and when she came back she carried in her arms the woodman's axe. "That is it!" he cried; "That is it!" "Yes," said the fairy, "this is the honest axe with which you earn the bread to feed your hungry children. Because you would not lie, the silver axe and the gold one shall both be yours." The woodman thanked the fairy, and hurried home to show his treasures to his family.

On the way he met a neighbor, a lazy man, who had spent all that he owned. "Good day!"

said the neighbor; "where did you get those fine axes?" Then the woodman told him.

Away hurried the lazy man to try his luck at the river. Down went his axe into the water, and loudly he cried for help. The water-fairy came and asked him the cause of his weeping. "I have lost my axe," he said; "I have lost my good axe."

The fairy sank beneath the water. Soon she brought up an axe of gold. "Is this your axe?" she asked. "Yes," he cried, greedily, "that is mine; I know it so well."

"You dishonest rogue!" said the fairy; "this is my axe, not yours. I shall take it home with me, but you must dive for your own if you wish to get it."

DISCONTENT.

Down in a field, one day in June,
The flowers all bloomed together,
Save one, who tried to hide herself,
And drooped that pleasant weather.

A robin who had flown too high,
And felt a little lazy,
Was resting near this buttercup
Who wished she were a daisy.

For daisies grow so trig and tall,
She always had a passion
For wearing frills around her neck,
In just the daisies' fashion.

And buttercups must always be
The same old tiresome color ;
While daisies dress in gold and white,
Although their gold is duller.

"Dear Robin," said the sad young flower,
"Perhaps you'd not mind trying
To find a nice, white frill for me,
Some day when you are flying?"

"You silly thing," the robin said,
"I think you must be crazy :
I'd rather be my honest self,
Than any made-up daisy.

"You're nicer in your own bright gown,
The little children love you ;
Be the best buttercup you can,
And think no flower above you.

"Though swallows leave me out of sight,
We'd better keep our places ;
Perhaps the world would all go wrong
With one too many daisies.

"Look bravely up into the sky,
And be content with knowing
That God wished for a buttercup
Just here, where you are growing."

THE STORY OF ECHO.

Hundreds and hundreds of years ago, the people who lived on this beautiful earth told strange stories to one another, and believed many curious things.

Among other things, they believed that a beautiful race of beings called nymphs lived everywhere in the woods and streams, and shared the life of the trees and brooks. The fairest of these was Echo, and her voice was the sweetest of all.

One day Echo displeased Queen Juno. Now, you must know, Juno had wonderful power. She could change a nymph to a stone, or a fountain, or a breeze. And she said to Echo, ~~X~~

“You may keep your sweet voice, if you like, but you shall have nothing else. And you shall never speak first. You can only answer when others speak to you.”

Poor Echo! She became thin and pale, and thinner and paler, until at last Queen Juno's word became true. Only her voice was left.

She wandered from place to place in the woods, unseen, and heard only when others spoke.

On a quiet evening you may hear her, if you walk near some high rock where she loves to hide. Call to her, and she will answer.

"Where are you?" you may ask.

"Where are you?" she will reply.

"Are you Echo?"

"Echo!" she answers.

"Come to me!" you cry.

"Come to me!" she replies.

"I like you," you say to her.

"I like you," Echo repeats.

Now a very curious thing is true. Echo always answers in the same tone in which you speak to her. If you sing, she sings back to you. If you shout, she shouts to you again. If you cry, she cries, too. If you are cross and ill-natured, she will be cross and ill-natured, too.

Two boys once went into the woods to find Echo. They could not hear her voice, although they called and called. At last one of them cried impatiently, "You are a mean old cheat!"

Quick as thought came back the cross reply, "You are a mean old cheat!" The other boy cried quickly, "He didn't mean that." The same tone came back in Echo's reply, "He didn't mean that."

When the boys told their mother what had happened, she smiled, and said, "That happens, the world over. Gentle words will bring forth gentle words, and harsh tones will be echoed by harsh tones."

A SUMMER DAY.

This is the way the morning dawns :
 Rosy tints on flowers and trees,
 Winds that wake the birds and bees,
Dew-drops on the flowers and lawns—
This is the way the morning dawns.

This is the way the sun comes up :
 Gold on brooks and grass and leaves,
 Mists that melt above the sheaves,
Vine and rose and buttercup—
This is the way the sun comes up.

This is the way the rain comes down :
 Tinkle, tinkle, drop by drop,
 Over roof and chimney-top ;
Boughs that bend, and clouds that frown—
This is the way the rain comes down.

This is the way the river flows :
 Here a whirl, and there a dance,
 Slowly now, then, like a lance,
Swiftly to the sea it goes—
This is the way the river flows.

This is the way the daylight dies :
 Cows are lowing in the lane,
 Fire-flies wink o'er hill and plain,
Yellow, red, and purple skies—
This is the way the daylight dies.

A SONG FOR LITTLE MAY.

Have you heard the waters singing,
 Little May,
Where the willows green are bending
 O'er their way ?
Do you know how low and sweet,
O'er the pebbles at their feet,
Are the words the waves repeat,
 Night and day ?

Have you heard the robins singing,
 Little one,
When the rosy dawn is breaking—
 When 'tis done ?
Have you heard the wooing breeze
In the blossomed orchard trees,
And the drowsy hum of bees
 In the sun ?

All the earth is full of music,
 Little May—
Bird, and bee, and water singing
 On its way.
Let their silver voices fall
On thy heart with happy call,
“Praise the Lord, who loveth all,
 Night and day,”
 Little May.

THE ANXIOUS LEAF.

Once upon a time a little leaf was heard to sigh and cry, as leaves do when a gentle wind is about.

“What is the matter, little leaf?” said the twig.

“The wind has just told me that some day it will pull me off and throw me down to die on the ground,” sobbed the little leaf.

The twig told it to the branch on which it grew, and the branch told it to the tree; and when the tree heard it, it rustled all over, and sent back word to the leaf: “Do not be afraid; hold on tightly, and you shall not go until you wish it.”

So the leaf stopped sighing, and went on rustling and singing. Every time the tree shook itself, and stirred up all its leaves, the branches shook themselves, and the little twig shook itself; and the little leaf danced up and down merrily, as if nothing could ever pull it off.

And so it grew all summer long, and till October. And, when the bright rays of autumn came, the little leaf saw all the leaves around becoming very beautiful. Some were yellow and some scarlet, and some striped with both colors. Then it asked the tree what it meant.

And the tree said : " All the leaves are getting ready to fly away ; and they have put on these beautiful colors because of joy." Then the little leaf began to wish to fly away too, and grew very beautiful in thinking of it.

When it was very gay in all its colors it saw that the branches had no color in them, and so it said : " Oh, branches ! why are you lead-color and we so red and golden ?" The branches answered softly : " We must keep on our work-clothes, for our life is not done ; but your clothes are for a holiday, because your tasks are over."

Just then a little puff of wind came, and the leaf let go without thinking of it ; and the wind took it up and turned it over and over, and whirled it like a spark of fire in the air ; and then it dropped gently down under the edge of the fence among hundreds of leaves, and fell into a dream, and never waked up to tell what it dreamed about.

ONE, TWO, THREE.

It was an old, old, old, old lady,
And a boy who was half-past three ;
And the way that they played together
Was beautiful to see.

She couldn't go running and jumping,
And the boy, no more could he,
For he was a thin little fellow,
With a thin little twisted knee.

They sat in the yellow sunlight,
Out under the maple tree ;
And the game that they played, I'll tell you,
Just as it was told to me.

It was Hide-and-Go-Seek they were playing,
Though you'd never have known it to be,
With an old, old, old, old lady
And a boy with a twisted knee.

The boy would bend his face down
On his one little sound right knee,
And he'd guess where she was hiding
In guesses One, Two, Three.

"You are in the china closet !"
He would cry, and laugh with glee.
It wasn't the china closet ;
But he still had Two and Three.

"You are up in Papa's big bedroom
In the chest with the queer old key !"
And she said "You are *warm* and *warmer*,
But you're not quite right," said she.

"It can't be the little cupboard
Where Mamma's things used to be,
So it must be the clothes-press, Gran'ma,"
And he found her with his Three.

Then she covered her face with her fingers,
That were wrinkled and white and wee,
And she guessed where the boy was hiding
With a One, and a Two and Three.

And they never had stirred from their places
Right under the maple tree—
This old, old, old, old lady
And the boy with the lame little knee,
This dear, dear, dear old lady
And the boy who was half-past three.

THE THREE BEARS.

A very long time ago, there was a bold, rude little girl, who lived in a far off country. The village people called her Silverlocks, because her curly hair was so light and shiny. She was a sad romp, and so full of her pranks, that her parents could never keep her quiet at home.

One day when she had been told not to go out, she trotted off into a wood, to string necklaces of blossoms, to chase the bees, and to pull wild roses; and she ran about from place to place, until at last she came to a lonely spot, where she saw a pretty-looking small house. Finding the door a little way open, and the parlor window also, she peeped in, but could see

no one ; and slyly she laughed to think what fine fun she would have before the good folks came back. So she made up her mind to go boldly into the house and look about her.

Now it chanced that a family of three bears was living in this house. The first was the great papa, called Rough Bruin, from his thick, shaggy coat ; the second was a smaller bear, called Mrs. Bruin, and sometimes Mammy Muff, from her soft fur ; the third was a little funny brown bear, their own dear pet, called Tiny. The house was empty when little Silverlocks found it out, because the bears had all gone out for a morning walk. Before going from home, the great bear had told Mrs. Bruin to rub down Tiny's face, and make him tidy, while he was busy in brushing his own hair, so that all three might have a pleasant walk in the woods, while the rich rabbit-soup, which they were to have for dinner, cooled upon the table in the parlor. When they were all ready they went out for their walk, and they left both the door and the window a little open.

In the bears' house there was only a parlor and a bedroom, and when that saucy puss, Silverlocks, threw open the door and went in, she found there was a pleasant smell, as if something nice had just been cooked, and on looking

in the parlor, she saw three jars of steaming soup standing on the table—dinner having been got ready for the three bears by Mrs. Bruin. There was a big black jar quite full of soup for Rough Bruin, a smaller white jar of soup for Mammy Muff, and a little blue jar for Tiny, and with every jar there was a deep wooden spoon. The little girl was now as hungry as she was full of mischief, and felt quite glad when she saw the soup-jars on the table. It did not take her long to make up her mind how to act—taste the nice-smelling soup she would, happen what might. It would, she thought, be such good fun; she would then run home again, and have a fine tale to tell old Mike the groom—one that would make him laugh till Christmas; for that silly fellow, too, liked mischief, and taught Silverlocks all sorts of foolish tricks, and laughed at all her naughty ways, which was surely not the best plan to correct her faults, and make a good child of her.

After looking outside to see that no one was coming, she began first to taste the soup in Rough Bruin's great jar, but it was so very hot with pepper that it burned her mouth and throat. Then she tried Mammy Muff's jar, but the soup was too salt—there was no bread in it either, and she did not like it at all. Then she tried Tiny's soup, and she found it was just to

her taste, and had nice bits of white bread in it. So she thought she would have it and run all risks. Now, before the little willful child sat down to eat Master Tiny's soup, she looked for a seat, and saw there were three chairs in the room. One, a very large oak chair, was the great bear's seat; another of a smaller size, with a velvet cushion, was Mrs. Bruin's chair; and a little chair with a rush bottom belonged to the little bear Tiny. These chairs Silverlocks tried all in turn. She could not sit in the very large chair, it was so hard; she did not like the smaller chair, it was too soft; but the little chair with the rush bottom, she found to be very nice, indeed. It was just the thing. So she sat down in it with the jar upon her knees, and began to enjoy herself. She dipped and dipped again, eating away till she had eaten up all the soup in the little blue jar. She did not leave one bit or drop of either bread, meat, or soup for the poor little bear, who at that very minute was begging the old folks to go home to their dinner—for indeed all three were hungry enough after their walk.

Just as Silverlocks had taken the last spoonful of soup and had got up on the chair, to put the jar back upon the table, the bottom of the chair fell out, and she tumbled on the floor. But she

was not hurt, and the little mad-cap jumped up and danced round the broken chair, thinking it all fine fun. She then began to wonder where the stairs could lead to, so up she went into the bedroom, where the bears used to sleep, and there she saw three beds side by side. Now one of these was a large bed for the big bear; there was also a smaller bed for Mrs. Bruin, and a nice little bed for Master Tiny. Being sleepy, she thought she would lie down and have a bit of a nap. So, after taking off her shoes, she first jumped on to the largest bed, but it was made so high at the top that she could not lie on it; she then tried the next bed, but that was too high at the foot; but she found the little bear's bed to be just right, so she got snugly into it. She let her cheek rest gently on the soft pillow, and watched the vine nodding in at a broken window pane, and the blue-fly buzzing about in the fold of the curtain, till she fell fast asleep, and dreamed about the same thing over and over again, often laughing in her sleep too, because the dream was all about her breaking the little chair.

While she was dreaming away, the bears came home very tired and hungry, and went to look after their soup. The big bear cried out in a loud, angry voice :

“WHO HAS MEDDLED WITH MY SOUP?”

Mammy Muff next said in a loud voice too, but not so gruffly as Rough Bruin :

“WHO HAS MEDDLED WITH MY SOUP?”

But when the little bear saw his jar lying empty on the table, he bit his paws for grief, and asked over and over again, with his shrill little voice :

“Who has meddled with my soup?”

Soon after the big bear, with a voice of thunder, said :

“WHO HAS BEEN IN MY CHAIR, AND PUT IT OUT OF ITS PLACE?”

And Mrs. Bruin grumbled out :

“WHO HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR, AND PUT IT OUT OF ITS PLACE?”

But poor Tiny was more angry than either of them, and sadly sobbed as he cried :

“Who has been sitting in my little chair, and broken it?”

They now looked about below-stairs, feeling sure there was some one in the house, and then up-stairs they all went, snuffing and grunting in a very bad humor.

Said the great bear in a fury :

“SOME ONE HAS BEEN ON MY BED
AND RUMPLED IT!”

Then said Mammy Muff:

“SOME ONE HAS BEEN ON MY BED AND
RUMPLED IT!”

Tiny next mounted a stool, and jumped on to the foot of his own small bed. In a moment he squeaked out:

“*Some one has been on my bed—and here she is; oh, here she is!*” And he opened his mouth, and looked as fierce and as wicked as could be at Silverlocks.

The little girl had not been roused from her sleep by the loud voices of Mr. and Mrs. Bruin, but the shrill, piercing tones of Tiny's voice waked her right up, and she was startled enough to find herself nose to nose with the angry little bear, and she was still more afraid, when she also saw two great bears in the room. Now the great bear had, very well for her, opened the window. So she quickly slid off the bed, and flew across the room, took one jump at the opened sash, and dropped upon the turf below. She rolled over and over on coming to the ground, but up again she soon got, for, on looking at the open window, she saw the three bears staring wildly at her, and making a great noise. When the little busy-body safely reached

home, she got a severe scolding for her pains. She never forgot the fright which the sight of the three bears had given her, and so she took good care, ever after, to keep away from places where she had no right to go, and also to avoid meddling with things that did not belong to her.

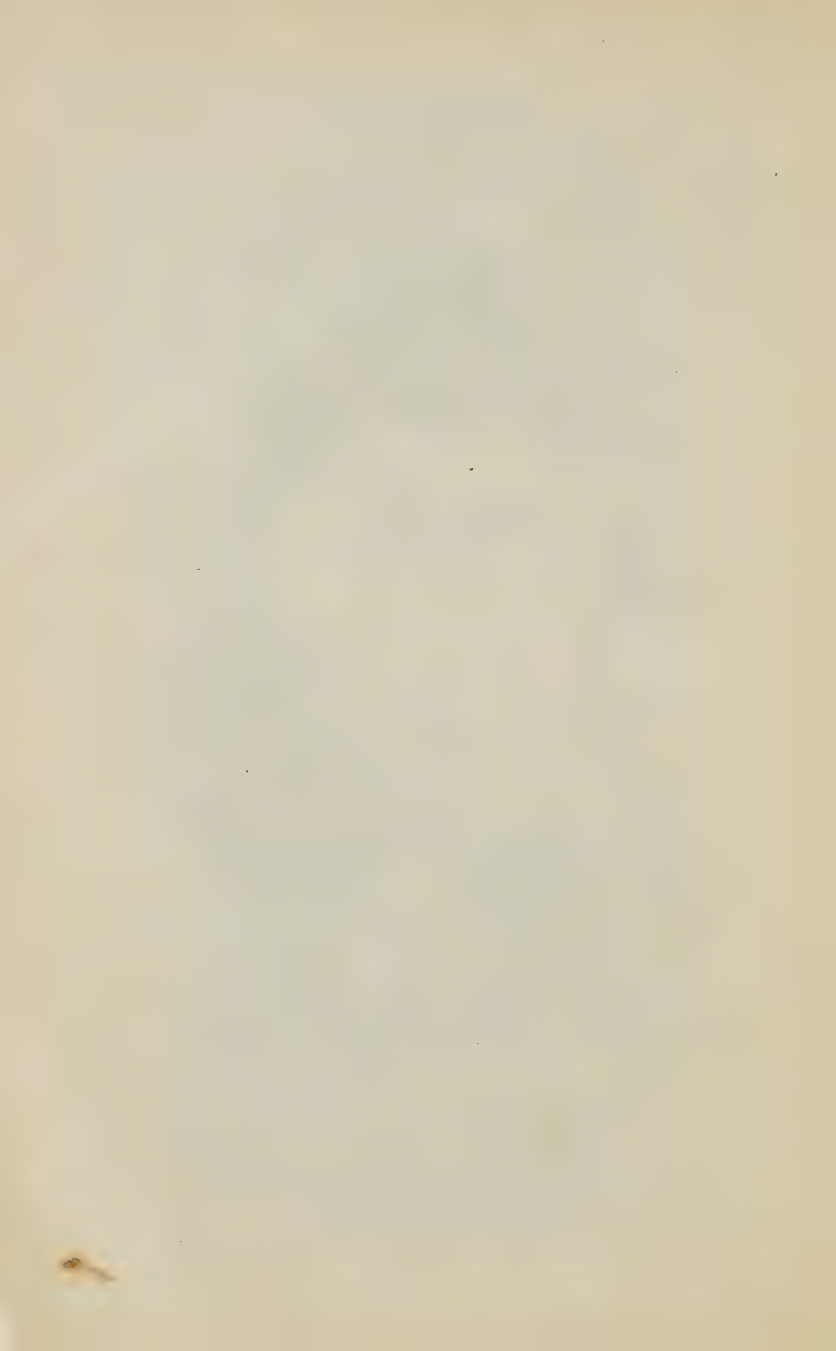
THE MISSION OF A ROSE.

Only a rosebud kissed by the dew,
Out in a garden fair it grew,
Loved by the sunshine, wooed by the wind,
Yet to be out in the world it pined.
Roses around it had gone away,
Here all alone it was doomed to stay ;
Ah ! said the rosebud, could I go too,
Some loving work in the world to do.

One summer morn came a maiden there
Seeking a flower, a flower to wear ;
Spied out the bud, amid green leaves curled,
Gathered and bore it out in the world.
There in her simple dress it lay,
Hearing her heart beat all the day,
“ Ah ! ” said the rosebud, “ Now let me break
Into a rose, for her sweet sake.”



A ROSE.



But still a bud it was given away,
A sick child saw it from where she lay,
It brought to the pale sad face a smile,
Pain was forgotten just for a while.
“Now,” said the rosebud, “Let me bloom,”
And its fragrance floated across the room;
The bud was a rose at dawn of day,
But the soul of the child had passed away.


THE KING AND THE GOOSE BOY.

It was a bright sunny afternoon when King Joseph of Bavaria left his palace and wandered into the park alone. When he reached a quiet spot he sat down, and taking a book from his pocket began to read.

He read until the sound of the wind in the trees made him feel drowsy. Then he placed the book on the seat beside him, and was soon fast asleep.

When he awoke, he continued his walk through the park, and passed into a meadow which bordered on a pretty little lake.

Suddenly he thought of his book. He did not wish to walk back for it himself, so he looked about for a messenger. No one was in sight but a boy of twelve years, who was keeping a flock of geese.



"My boy," said the king, "on such a bench in the park you will find a little book that I was reading. Go and bring it to me and you shall have a dollar."

The boy did not know the king, but he thought that no man in his senses would offer a dollar for such a small service. So he simply glanced upwards and said, "Do you think I'm a fool?"

"Do you think I am making fun of you?" asked the king. "Of course you are," said the boy. "Nobody would give a dollar for so little work as that."

"Here, then, is the dollar," said the king. "Now, perhaps you will go." The boy took the money, and his eyes sparkled, for he never had so much silver in his hand before. Still he did not move.

"Why do you not go?" asked the king. "I am in a hurry." The boy took off his hat and stammered out, "I should like to go, but I dare not. If my geese were to get away I should be dismissed."

"Never mind!" said the king. "I shall look after the geese while you are away."

"You?" said the boy, looking at the stranger from head to foot; "you would make a fine goose-keeper. Why, they would run away down

the hill into the water, and then I should have a pretty time of it. Look at that old fellow with the black head. He belongs to the king's gardener, and he is a brute to manage. He would run away before you could turn around."

"But I can manage people," said the king, "and surely I could manage a flock of geese." "Ah!" said the lad, "then you are perhaps a schoolmaster. But boys and girls are easier to manage than these geese."

The king could not keep from laughing, but he told the boy he would pay for any damage to the geese. So the little fellow started off, after putting his whip into the king's hand.

But he soon stopped and ran back. "What now?" enquired the king. "Why! crack the whip!" shouted the boy. "Crack the whip! or they will all be away." So the king tried and tried, but couldn't make the least sound.

"Well, you are a fine one!" said the boy. "You want to keep geese and can't crack a whip!"

So he snatched the whip from the king, and swinging it round made it crack and crack again, until all the geese closed in together and began to eat the sweet grass. "That is the way now," said the little fellow. "Now try it!" So the king tried again, and after a time could make

the whip sound a little. Then the boy went off at full speed.

No sooner was he gone than the geese appeared to know it. The big fellow with the black head gave two or three screeches, and then up the whole flock rose in a body, and half-running, half-flying, were soon settled in the middle of the lake.

The king shouted, but it was of no use. He tried to crack the whip, but he couldn't make it sound. He ran here and there, but only succeeded in driving the birds farther into the lake. Then overcome with heat, he threw himself on the grass and laughed loud and long.

When the boy returned with the book, he was both hot and angry. "I knew you couldn't mind them," he said. "Now I am in for trouble. But you must help me to get them together again." So he showed the king how to call, and how to wave his arms. Then after a long time they chased the geese out of the lake, into the meadow.

Then said the boy, "No one will ever get me to leave my geese again—not even the king." "Quite right, my boy," said the king, handing him another dollar. "The king will never ask to take care of them again, for you see I myself am the king."

It was now the boy's turn to look amazed. Taking off his hat, he thanked the king for his kindness, but remarked, "I am very sorry to have talked to you as I did, but even a king can't manage geese if he hasn't learned how."

SUMMER RAIN.

O gentle, gentle summer rain,
Let not the silver lily pine,
The drooping lily pine in vain,
To feel that dewy touch of thine,
To drink thy freshness once again,
O gentle, gentle summer rain !

In heat the landscape quivering lies ;
The cattle pant beneath the trees ;
Through parching air and purple skies,
The earth looks up in vain for thee ;
For thee, for thee it looks in vain,
O gentle, gentle summer rain.

Come, thou, and brim the meadow streams,
And soften all the hills with mist ;
O falling dew, from burning dreams,
By thee shall herb and flower be kissed,
And earth shall bless thee yet again,
O gentle, gentle summer rain.

LORD NELSON'S BOYHOOD.

When Lord Nelson was a boy he went as a midshipman on board a vessel commanded by his uncle, on a cruise of discovery in the Arctic ocean.

One day a party was sent out on a large field of ice to try to shoot seals or other animals for fresh meat. Young Nelson went with them.

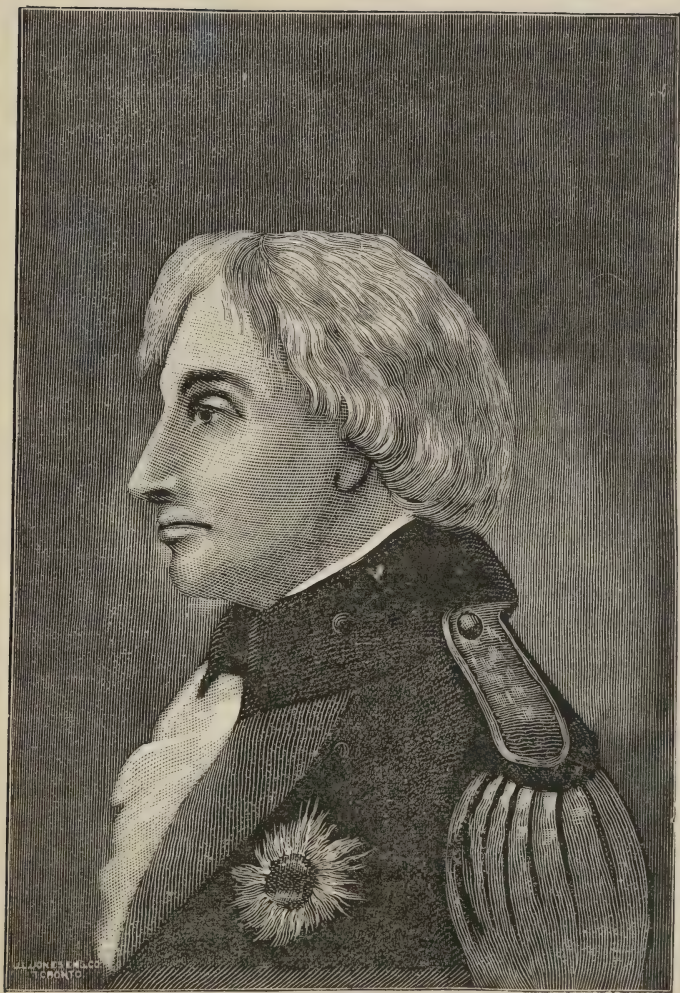
They had been out some time when they noticed that Horatio was missing. They could not see him anywhere.

At length they heard the report of a gun, and running in the direction of the sound, they found that he had wounded a great white bear, but that he had only slightly disabled it.

Fortunately for him there was a large crack in the ice between him and the bear, and as often as the bear tried to jump across this crack, young Nelson struck him with his musket, and knocked him back.

The whole party ran towards him, and arrived just in time. The boy in making a hard blow at the bear slipped and fell, and his gun fell from his hands.

In a moment the angry beast had bounded across the chasm and was about to kill the



LORD NELSON.

defenceless lad, when one of the men fired and saved the too daring boy.

His uncle was at first very angry, and scolded Horatio for his folly; but he could not help admiring his bravery.

“Why did you go alone to attack a bear?” he asked.

“I wanted to get the skin for my father,” the boy answered.

Then the captain's voice grew tender, and taking his nephew's hand, he said: “Were you not afraid, Horatio?”

“What is meant by being afraid, uncle?” the boy asked.

His uncle tried to make him understand what fear is, but the brave boy could not understand him fully, because he had never felt fear.

The enemies of England found, when he became a man, that Lord Nelson was never afraid of them, and his sailors were always brave when they had their darling hero to lead them.

EVENING.

It is the hour of evening,
When nature is at rest :
Each weary bird is sleeping
Within its pleasant nest ;
The bee has ceased its humming,
The fish no longer springs,
Even the happy butterfly
Closes its shiny wings.

The pretty flowers are lying
Half hidden in the grass ;
They cannot hear our footsteps
Or our voices as we pass.
For all their darling blossoms
Are shut in slumber deep,
Just like the eyes of children
When they are fast asleep !

The flowing of the water
Is a very sleepy sound—
The lullaby of nature,
With silence all around ;
The music of the night-time,
It lulleth to repose.
The never-resting water,
How sleepily it flows !

THE UGLY DUCKLING.

PART I.

It was fine summer weather in the country. The corn was golden, the oats were green, and the haystacks in the meadows were beautiful. Around the cornfields and the meadows were large forests, and in these forests were deep pools of water. How pleasant it was to walk in the country !

In a sunny spot, stood a pleasant old farmhouse. It was near a deep river, and from the house down to the water grew great burdock leaves. These were so high that a little child might stand upright under the taller ones.

This spot was as wild as the marsh itself.

In this cozy place sat a duck on her nest, waiting for her young brood to hatch. She was beginning to get tired of her task, for the little ones were a long time coming out of their shells, and she seldom had any visitors. The other ducks liked to swim in the water much better than to climb the slippery banks and sit under a burdock leaf to keep her company.

At last one shell cracked, and then another. From each egg came a living creature that lifted its head and cried, "Peep ! peep !"

“Quack ! quack !” said the mother. Then they all tried to quack, and looked about them at the green leaves. The mother let them look, because green is good for the eyes.

“How large the world is !” said all the young ducks. For they found they had much more room than when they lay in the shell.

“Indeed !” said the mother, “do you think this is the whole world ? It reaches far over the other side of the garden, as far as the parson’s field ; but I have never gone so far as that.”

“Are you all out ?” she asked, rising to her feet. “Oh, no ! you have not all come yet. That largest egg lies there still. How much longer must this go on ? I am quite tired ;” and she seated herself again on her nest.

“Well, how are you getting on ?” asked an old duck who came to pay her a visit.

“It takes so long for that one egg,” replied the duck from her nest ; “it will not break. But just look at the others ! Are they not the dearest ducklings you ever saw ? They are the image of their father.”

“Let me look at that egg which will not break !” said the old duck. “I believe it is a turkey’s egg. I was led to hatch some once, and after all my care and trouble with the young

ones, they were afraid of the water. I could not bring them to it. I did my best, but it was of no use. Let me see that egg !

“Yes ; it is a turkey’s egg. Let it lie there. You would better teach the other children to swim.”

“I will sit here a little while longer,” said the duck. “I have sat here so long already, I may as well try a few days more.”

“Just as you please,” said the old duck, turning away.

PART II.

At last the great egg broke. “Peep ! peep !” said the young one, as it stepped forth. He was larger than the others, and very ugly.

The duck looked at him. “He is certainly a very large duckling,” she said. “He does not look like the others. Can it be that he is a young turkey ? We shall soon see. Into the water he must go, even if I have to push him.”

On the next day the weather was fine. The sun shone upon all the green burdock leaves. The mother duck went with her whole family down to the water.

Splash ! She sprang in. “Quack ! quack !” cried she, and all the little ducklings plunged in after her.

The water closed over their little heads, but they quickly came to the surface, and swam bravely. Every one was in the water; even the ugly young duckling was swimming.

“No, he is no turkey,” said the mother. “See how finely he uses his legs, and how well he holds himself! He is my own child; and he is not so very ugly, either, if you look at him aright.

“Quack! quack! Just come with me, and I will take you to the duck yard. But stay close by me, so that no one may tread upon you, and take care that the cat does not get you!”

And so they came into the farmyard, and there they found a great quarrel, for two families of ducks were fighting over an eel’s head, which, after all, the cat seized and ate.

“See, children! that is the way of the world,” said the duck mother, who would have liked the eel’s head herself.

“Now, use your legs,” she added, “and behave as well as you can! You must bow your heads before the old duck yonder. She is the most distinguished duck in the yard. She is of Spanish blood: that is why she is so fat: and see! she has a red rag tied to her leg. That is something to be proud of. It is a great honor for a duck. She is so much prized that

they fear to lose her, and by this sign everybody knows her well."

"Now, quickly! do not turn your toes in, but out,—see?—so! Now bow your heads and say 'Quack!'" And so they did, but the other ducks all laughed aloud.

"Just see! here comes another brood," said an old duck. "As if there were not enough already. And, oh! see that duckling! We will not have him here!" Then one duck flew at him and bit him in the neck.

"Let him alone!" said the mother duck. "He does nobody any harm."

"Yes; but he is so big and so ugly," said the duck who had bitten him, "and therefore he must be bitten."

"They are beautiful children," said the old duck with the red rag on her leg,—“all but that one. I wish he were improved."

"That cannot be done, Your Grace," said the duck mother. "He is not beautiful, but he has a good temper, and swims grandly with the others,—I think even better than they. I could wish he were not so large; but I think he stayed too long in the egg."

Then she stroked his feathers with her bill. "I think he will grow up strong, and able to take care of himself."

"The other ducklings do very well," said the old duck. "Now, make yourselves at home, and if you find an eel's head you may bring it to me."

And so they made themselves at home.

But that poor duckling who had come last from the egg was bitten, and pushed, and laughed at by the ducks as well as the hens.

"He is too big," said they. And the turkey cock, who had been born into the world with spurs, and thought he was a king, puffed himself out like a ship with full sails, and flew at the duckling. The poor thing did not know where to stand or where to go; he was very unhappy, because he was so abused by the whole duck yard.

PART III.

So went the first day, and afterwards it grew worse. The poor duckling was driven about by everybody. Even his sisters turned against him, and said, "Oh! you ugly thing! I wish the cat might catch you!" The ducks bit him, the hens beat him, and the girl who fed them kicked him with her foot.

At last he ran away.

"It is just because I am so ugly," thought the duckling. And he flew until he came to a great

field where some wild ducks lived. Here he lay all night, for he was tired and troubled.

In the morning the wild ducks awoke, and saw their new comrade.

“What sort of thing are you?” they said. And the duckling bowed on all sides, as politely as he could.

“What an ugly creature you are!” said the wild ducks. “But that doesn’t matter, if you don’t marry into our family.”

Poor thing! He had no wish to marry a wild duck. He simply wanted to lie among the rushes, and to drink the water in the marsh. He lay there two whole days, and then two wild geese flew down where he was hiding. They were young things, for they had not been out of the egg long. That explains why they were so saucy.

“Listen, comrade,” they said; “you are so ugly that we like you very well. Will you go with us? Not far away there is another marsh as lovely as this, and perhaps you can find a wild goose there who is as ugly as you are.”

Crack! crack! they heard, and both geese fell dead on the marsh. The sound came again,—piff! paff! crack! crack! A flock of wild geese flew into the air.

The huntsmen had come. The smoke from their guns rolled over the marsh like clouds over the water. The poor duckling was afraid. He turned his head this way and that, but he did not know where to go.

Just then a great dog came near. His tongue hung from his mouth, his jaws were open, and his eyes glared fearfully.

He thrust his nose close to the duckling, and showed his sharp teeth; but, splash! splash!—away he went without touching him.

“Oh!” sighed the duckling, “how thankful I am that I am so ugly! Even a dog will not bite me.”

So he lay still, while the shot rattled around him.

It was late in the day before it became quiet. Even then the poor thing did not dare to move. He waited quietly for many hours. At last he flew forth, away from the marsh, as fast as he could. He hurried over field and meadow; but a storm came up, and the wind blew so hard that he could not fly against it.

PART IV.

Toward evening he saw a tiny little cottage. It seemed ready to fall, it was so old. It remained standing because it did not know on

which side to fall first. The winds blew, the rain fell, and the duckling could fly no farther. He sat down by the cottage, and then he saw that its door was open, leaving room for him to enter. He slipped through the door and found shelter.

There lived in the cottage a woman, with her cat and her hen. The cat was called Little Son by his mistress. He could raise his back, and purr; he could even throw out sparks from his fur if he was stroked the wrong way.

The hen had very short legs. Her mistress named her Chicken Short Legs. She laid good eggs, and the woman loved her as if she were her own child.

In the morning they saw the strange duckling. The cat began to purr, and the hen began to cluck.

“What is this?” said the woman, as she looked about her. But she did not see very well, and so she thought that the duckling must be a fat duck which had lost its way.

“That’s a prize!” she said. “Now I can have some ducks’ eggs.” So she let the duckling stay in the house three weeks; but no eggs came.

Now the cat was the master of the house and the hen was the mistress. They always said,

“We and the world,” for they believed that they were half of the world,—and the better half, too. The duckling thought differently, but the hen would not listen to him.

“Can you lay eggs?” she asked.

“No.”

“Then be so good as to hold your tongue.”

And the cat said, “Can you raise your back, and purr, and send out sparks?”

“No.”

“Then you have no right to speak when sensible people are speaking.”

So the duckling sat in the corner, feeling very lonely. After a while the sun shone, and the fresh air came into the room. Then he began to feel a great longing to swim in the water, and he could not help telling the hen.

“How absurd!” she said. “You have nothing to do, and so you think nonsense. If you could lay eggs, or purr, it would be all right.”

“But it is so delightful to swim about on the water,” said the duckling. “It is so grand to have it close over your head, while you dive down to the bottom!”

“Yes, it must be delightful!” said the hen. “You must be out of your senses. Ask the cat. He knows more than any one else. Ask him

how he would like to swim on the water, and dive down to the bottom. I will not tell you what *I* think. Ask our mistress, the old lady, for she knows more than all the rest of the world. Do you think she would like to swim, or to let the water close over her head?"

"You do not understand me," said the duckling.

"We do not understand you? Who can understand you, then? Do you think you know more than all the rest?—than the cat, and the old lady?—I do not speak of myself. Do not think such nonsense, child, but thank your stars that we let you in. Are you not in a warm room? Are you not in good company, who may teach you something? But you talk nonsense, and your company is not very pleasant. I am speaking for your good. What I say may not be pleasant to hear, but that is a proof of my friendship. I advise you to lay eggs, and to learn to purr as quickly as possible."

"I believe I must go out into the world again," said the poor duckling.

And the duckling went. He came to the water, where he could swim and dive, but all other animals turned away from him because he was so ugly.

PART V.

And now came the autumn. The leaves of the forest were gold and brown. The wind caught them as they fell, and whirled them into the cold air. The clouds hung full of hail and snowflakes, and the ravens sat on the ferns, crying, "Croak! croak!" It made one shiver to see the world.

All this was hard for the poor duckling.

One evening, at sunset, a flock of beautiful birds came out of the bushes. The duckling had never seen any like them before. They were swans. They curved their graceful necks, and their soft feathers were white and shining. They flew high in the air, and the ugly duckling was left sad and sorrowful.

He whirled in the water, stretched his neck high in the air, and uttered a strange cry. He could never forget those beautiful birds; and when they were out of sight, he was beside himself. He knew not their names, only that they had gone; and, oh! how he wished that he might be as lovely as they were.

The winter was cold,—so cold. The duckling was obliged to swim about on the water to keep from freezing, but every night the place where he swam grew smaller and smaller.

At last it froze so hard that the ice in the water crackled as he moved. The duckling had to paddle with his legs to keep the water from freezing. At last he was worn out, and lay still and helpless, frozen in the ice.

Early in the morning a poor man came by. He saw what had happened. He broke the ice with his wooden shoe, and carried the duckling home to his wife. There he came to himself again.

But the children wanted to play with him, and the duckling was afraid that they would hurt him. He started up in terror, flew into the milkpan, and splashed the milk about the room. The woman clapped her hands, which frightened him the more. He flew into the meal tub, and out again. How he looked !

The woman screamed, and struck at him with the tongs. The children laughed and screamed, and tried to catch him. The door stood open. He was just able to slip out among the bushes, and to lie down in the sun.

It would be too sad if I were to tell you all that the poor duckling suffered in the hard winter ; but when it had passed, he found himself lying, one morning, in the marsh amongst the rushes. The warm sun shone, the lark sang, the beautiful spring had come,

Then the duckling felt that his wings were strong. He flapped them against his sides, and rose high into the air. He flew on and on, until he came to the great garden where the apple trees blossomed. Elder trees bent their long branches down to the stream, which flowed through the grass.

Oh! here it was fresh and beautiful; and, soon, from the bushes close by came three beautiful swans. They rustled their feathers, and swam lightly on the water. The duckling remembered the lovely birds. He felt strangely unhappy.

"I will fly to them," he said. "They will kill me because I am so ugly. That is just as well. It is better to be killed by the swans than to be bitten by the ducks, beaten by the hens, pushed about by the girl who feeds the chickens, and starved with hunger in the winter."

So he flew into the water, and swam toward the splendid swans. The moment they saw him, they rushed to meet him.

"Only kill me!" said the poor duckling. He bent his head to the water, and waited for death.

But what did he see in the clear water? He saw his own picture in the water, no longer an ugly duckling, but a beautiful white swan!

To be born in a duck's nest in a farmyard is no matter, if one is hatched from a swan's egg.

He was glad now that he had suffered sorrow and trouble. He could enjoy so much better all the new happiness and pleasure. The great swans swam around him, and stroked his neck with their beaks.

Some children came into the garden, and threw bread and corn into the water.

“See!” said the youngest; “there is a new one.”

The other children were delighted.

“Yes, a new one has come;” and they clapped their hands and ran to their father and mother, and brought cakes and bread to throw into the water.

They shouted together, “The new one is the most beautiful, he is so young and so pretty.”

And the old swans bowed their graceful heads before him.

Then he felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wing. He did not know what to do, he was so happy; but he was not at all proud. He had been despised while he was ugly, and now he heard them say that he was the most beautiful of all the birds.

Even the elder tree bent down its boughs into the water before him, and the sun shone clear and bright.

He shook his white feathers, curved his slender neck, and cried from a full heart, "I never dreamed, while I was an ugly duckling, that I could be so happy!"

THE RIVER.

River, River, little River,
Bright you sparkle on your way,
O'er the yellow pebbles dancing,
Through the flowers and foliage glancing,
Like a child at play.

River, River, swelling River,
On you rush, o'er rough and smooth,
Louder, faster, brawling, leaping
Over rocks, by rose-banks sweeping,
Like impetuous youth.

River, River, brimming River,
Broad and deep, and still as Time;
Seeming still—yet still in motion,
Tending onward to the ocean,
Just like mortal prime.

River, River, rapid River,
Swifter now you slip away;
Swift and silent as an arrow;
Through a channel dark and narrow,
Like life's closing day.

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THE STONE IN THE ROAD.

There was once a very rich man who lived in a beautiful castle near a small town. He loved the people of the town, and tried in many ways to help them. He planted trees in the streets, built schoolhouses for the children, and gave his gardens for pleasure-grounds on Saturday afternoons.

But the people did not love to work. They were unhappy because they were not as rich as the owner of the castle. They were never done complaining and grumbling.

One day the rich man got up very early and placed a large stone in the road that led past his home. Then he hid himself behind the fence and waited to see what would happen.

By and by a poor man came along driving a cow. He scolded because the stone lay in his path, but he walked around it and passed on his way. Then a farmer came in a waggon. He, too, began to scold and complain because the stone was in the way, but he drove around it and continued his journey. And so the day passed. Every one who came by scolded and fretted because of the stone, but nobody touched it.

At last, just at evening, the miller's boy came down the road. He was a hard-working young fellow, and he was very tired after a hard day's work. But he thought to himself, "It is almost dark. Some one will fall over this stone during the night, and perhaps get badly hurt. I must move it out of the way." So he tugged, and pulled and pushed, and at last succeeded in moving it from its place.

To his great surprise he found a bag lying beneath it. The bag was well filled with gold, and on it was written these words, "This gold belongs to the one who moves the stone."

It is no wonder that the miller's boy went home with a light heart. How do you suppose the other townsmen felt who passed along the road?

THE WISE FAIRY.

Once, in a rough, wild country,
On the other side of the sea,
There lived a dear little fairy,
And her home was in a tree.
A dear little, queer little fairy,
And as rich as she could be.

To northward and to southward,
She could overlook the land,
And that was why she had her house
In a tree, you understand.
For she was the friend of the friendless,
And her heart was in her hand.

And when she saw poor women
Patiently, day by day,
Spinning, spinning, and spinning
Their lonesome lives away,
She would hide in the flax of their distaffs
A lump of gold, they say.

And when she saw poor ditchers,
Knee-deep in some wet dike,
Digging, digging, and digging,
To their very graves, belike,
She would hide a shining lump of gold
Where their spades would be sure to strike.

And when she saw poor children
Their goats from the pastures take,
Or saw them milking and milking
Till their arms were ready to break,
What a plashing in their milking pails
Her gifts of gold would make!

Sometimes in the night, a fisher
Would hear her sweet low call,
And all at once a salmon of gold
Right out of his net would fall;
But what I have to tell you
Is the strangest thing of all.

If any ditcher, or fisher,
Or child, or spinner old
Bought shoes for his feet, or bread to eat,
Or a coat to keep from the cold,
The gift of the good old fairy
Was always trusty gold.

But if a ditcher, or a fisher,
Or spinner, or child so gay,
Bought jewels, or wine, or silks so fine,
Or staked his pleasure at play,
The fairy's gold in his very hold
Would turn to a lump of clay.

So, by and by, the people
Got open their stupid eyes :
“We must learn to spend to some good end,”
They said, “if we are wise ;
“’Tis not in the gold we waste or hold
That a golden blessing lies.”

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION.

A gentleman once advertised for a boy to assist him in his office, and nearly fifty applied for the place. Out of the whole number he in a short time chose one, and sent all the rest away.

“I should like to know,” said a friend, “on what ground you chose that boy. He had not a single recommendation with him.”

“You are mistaken,” said the gentleman ; “he had a great many :—

“He wiped his feet when he came in, and closed the door after him ; showing that he was orderly and tidy.

“He gave up his seat instantly to that lame old man ; showing that he was kind and considerate.

“He took off his cap when he came in, and answered my questions promptly and respectfully ; showing that he was polite.

“He lifted up the book which I had purposely laid on the floor, and placed it on the table, while all the rest stepped over it, or shoved it aside ; showing that he was careful.

“And he waited quietly for his turn, instead of pushing the others aside ; showing that he was modest.

“When talking with him, I noticed that his clothes were carefully brushed, his hair in nice order, and his teeth as white as milk. When he wrote his name, I observed that his finger-nails were clean, instead of being tipped with jet, like those of the handsome little fellow in the blue jacket.

“Don’t you call these things letters of recommendation ? I do ; and what I can know about a boy by using my eyes for ten minutes, is worth more than all the fine letters of recommendation he can bring me.”

FROM PIPPA PASSES.

The year's at the Spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His Heaven—
All's right with the world.

LITTLE THINGS.

A little spring had lost its way
Amid the grass and fern;
A passing stranger scooped a well
Where weary men might turn.
He walled it in, and hung with care
A ladle at its brink;
He thought not of the deed he did,
But judged that toil might drink.
He passed again, and lo! the well,
By summers never dried,
Had cooled ten thousand parching tongues,
And saved a life beside.

HOW A BUTTERFLY CAME.

Late in September a lady saw a worm upon a willow leaf. It was about two inches long, and almost as large as her little finger. Stripes of black, green and yellow went around its little body.

The lady carried leaf and sleeper home. She took willow leaves for it to eat, put them all in a glass dish, and tied lace over it.

In just one week her guest was gone. All the leaves were gone; only a lovely green bag was left. It was just one inch long, was made very neatly, and looked much like a little bed or cradle. No stitches could be seen, and the seams had an edge like gold cord.

Gold and black dots like tiny buttons were on it. The caterpillar had sewed himself in. His old clothes were near by. He had pushed them off in a hurry. The new home was made fast to a bit of cloth.

Almost six weeks the little sleeper lay in his silken cradle. Early in November he burst the pretty green hammock, and then the old home turned white.

A lovely butterfly came out. It had brown and golden wings, with stripes of black, like

cords, on them, and a feathery fringe of white for each stripe.

On the edges of the wings were white and yellow dots. The head was black, and also had white and yellow dots on it. The inside of the wings was darker; it was like orange-tinted velvet. All these changes were in less than two months.

THE REAL THIEF.

(A DOG'S STORY.)

I did not take it. Indeed not I,
I'll tell you the story; I'll tell you why:
I passed by the larder, all by myself;
I saw a fowl on the larder shelf.

I peeped through the door, and I said to Myself—
Don't you think that's a fowl on the larder shelf?
There's not the least doubt of it, answered Myself;
It's a very fat fowl on the larder shelf.

Well, there, never mind it, said I to Myself;
Come away and don't look at the larder shelf.
So I ran off at once, Miss; but somehow Myself,
When I wasn't looking, climbed up to the shelf;

But I caught him, and scolded the wicked Myself;
Come down sir, I told him, come down from the
shelf.

But he wouldn't obey me, that wicked Myself,
For he ate all the fowl on the larder shelf.

THE TOWN-MUSICIANS OF BREMEN.

PART I.

A poor farmer had a donkey which had patiently carried the corn to the mill for many a long day; now he was getting old and weak, and grew more and more unable for heavy work. Then the farmer began to think he perhaps wasn't quite worth keeping; and the donkey, thinking his master intended to get rid of him, ran away from the farm and set off on the road to the town of Bremen.

"At Bremen," he thought, "they will perhaps make me town-musician." After travelling some distance, he came to a hound, stretched out on the road and panting for breath. "What are you panting so for, my fine fellow?" asked the donkey.

"Oh," sighed the hound, "I am old and good-for-nothing. I can no longer hunt, and, as my master was going to kill me, I fled from him; and now, what can I do for a living?" "I'll tell you what," said the donkey; "I'm going to Bremen to be town-musician; come with me, and become a musician too. I will play the flute, and you shall beat the drum."

The hound was willing, so they continued their road together. They hadn't gone far before they came to a cat, sitting on the path, with a miserable, woe-begone face. "Hallo! Old Whiskers, what's gone wrong with you?" said the donkey.

"Who could be cheerful when his life is in danger?" replied the cat. "Because I'm growing old and my teeth are gone, and because it's pleasanter to sit by the fire and purr, than to chase and kill the mice, my mistress was going to drown me, so I ran away. Pray advise me, good gentlemen. What am I to do?"

"Come with us to Bremen," said the donkey. "You are very musical at night. Come and be a town-musician." Tabby agreed to this proposal, and set off along with them. Presently the three runaways came to a farmyard, and there, upon a gate, a cock was sitting and crowing with all his might.

"Your voice is shrill enough to split one's head open," said the donkey. "What's the matter with you?" "Well, I was crowing to tell folks we were going to have fine weather; but guests are coming, and my heartless mistress has told the cook to make soup of me for to-morrow, and this evening I'm to have my head cut off. So I am having a good crow while I can."

“Well, Red-comb, you had better come with us,” said the donkey. “We’re on our way to Bremen; and everywhere one can find something better to do than to die. You have a good loud voice; and, if we all sing out together, it will have a very fine effect.”

The cock consented, and the four comrades went on along the road together. Bremen was more than a day’s journey off; so, when night came, they encamped in a forest. The donkey and the hound lay down under the shelter of a tree, among the branches of which the cat and the cock settled, the cock flying to the topmost bough, where he thought he should be safest.

But, before he went to sleep, he peered carefully all round into the darkness, and at a little distance he fancied he saw a tiny spark. So he called out to his friends below that they must be near a house, for he saw a light burning.

“If that is so,” said the donkey, “then we had better jog on a little farther, for we are not very comfortable here.” The hound thought that a bone or two with a bit of meat on them would do him a world of good.

PART II.

So they made their way through the forest in the direction of the light, which grew brighter and larger as they drew nearer. Presently they

found themselves standing opposite a robber's house, all brilliantly lighted from top to bottom. The donkey, being the tallest, went and looked in at the window.

"What do you see, Graycoat?" asked the cock. "What do I see?" replied the donkey; "why, I see a table loaded with all kinds of good things to eat and drink, and robbers sitting all round it enjoying themselves." "That's just what we should like to be doing," said the cock. "Yes, indeed! how I wish we were there," said the donkey.

Then the four animals held a council as to how they could contrive to drive away the robbers; and, after much discussion, they hit upon a plan. The donkey was to put his fore-feet on the window-sill, the hound was to get on the donkey's back, the cat was to climb on the shoulders of the dog, and the cock was to fly up and perch on the head of the cat.

When all was ready, at a certain signal, the animals all began to sing out together; the donkey brayed, the hound barked, the cat mewed, and the cock crowed. Then they crashed through the window into the room, and the glass fell with a tremendous clatter on the floor.

The robbers, hearing such a horrible noise, and thinking that a ghost must have come into

the house, fled affrighted into the forest. The four friends now seated themselves at the table, highly satisfied with what was left, and ate enough to last them for a month.

Their plenteous meal ended, the sweet singers put out the lights, and each looked for a suitable sleeping-place. The donkey lay down on some straw in the yard, the hound found a cozy corner behind the door, the cat curled itself up upon the hearth near the warm ashes, and the cock perched himself on a beam in the barn; and, being very tired with their long journey, they were soon sound asleep.

A little after midnight, the robbers peered out of their hiding-place and saw that the lights were out in the house, and that everything was still. Said the captain, "What fools we were to let ourselves be frightened so." Then he sent one of the band to go and examine the house and see what was the matter.

Everything was perfectly quiet, so the messenger went into the kitchen to light a candle, and thinking the burning, fiery eyes of the cat were live coals, he held a lucifer match to them to light it. But the cat, not liking his blunder, flew in his face, spitting and scratching.

Frightened out of his wits, he was rushing out of the back door, when the hound, who had made

his bed there, sprang out and bit him on the leg ; and, as he darted across the yard, the donkey gave him a vicious kick with its hind-foot. Disturbed by all this commotion, the cock grew wide awake, and shrilled down from his beam, “ Cock-a-doodle-do ! ”

Away ran the robber to the captain as fast as his legs could carry him, and said, “ Oh, there is such a dreadful witch sitting in the house ; she spat at me and scratched my face with her finger-nails ; behind the back-door stands a man with a dagger, who stabbed me in the leg ; in the straw-yard is a black monster, who banged me with a monstrous wooden club ; and aloft upon the roof there sits a judge, who cried out, ‘ Bring the rogue to me.’ So I ran off as fast as I could.”

On hearing this, the robbers did not dare to go back to the house again ; and the four musicians of Bremen found it suited them so well, that they determined to settle there for the rest of their lives.

FAIRY FOLK.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men.

Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together ;
Green jacket, red-cap,
And white owl's feather.

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam :
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain-lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

LITTLE BOY BLUE.

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and staunch he stands ;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket molds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair ;
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now, don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise !"
So, toddling off to his trundle-bed,
He dreamt of the pretty toys ;
And, as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh ! the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true !

Aye, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place—
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face ;
And they wonder, as waiting the long years
through
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue,
Since he kissed them and put them there.

STORY OF A DROP OF WATER.

Up among the hills there is a dell where a headlong little stream rests for a moment, after leaping from the rocks above, before it hurries on toward the sea.

It rests in a deep pool, so clear that you may count the pebbles at the bottom ; and, when the sun shines, the little fish cast a shadow on the white stones. All round about, the ivy clings to the rocks ; and, just near enough to the water-fall to be sprinkled now and then with the spray, a wild convolvulus droops over the pool.

At the edge of one of the flower-bells I saw a drop of water hang, and it seemed as though the convolvulus were bending down an ear to listen to what the drop of water had to say.

I said to myself, "I will listen, too ; for if my ears are too dull for such a tiny voice, perhaps my heart can hear."

So I listened with my heart, and I will tell you what the drop of water seemed to be saying.

The convolvulus wanted to know all about the travels of the drop. "You restless little drop of water," it said, "where do you come from, and whither are you going? I sit here all the day, in the sunshine and the rain. I take thankfully what God gives me, and I am very happy. I love the stream, and the rocks, and the blue sky overhead ; they are all so good to me.

"But still, before I die, I should like to know what there is outside this little dell. The fishes never speak, and the birds only sing. It makes me glad to hear them ; but they sing about nothing but their mates and their little ones, and something else that I cannot rightly understand, though they say I shall know all about it after I am dead.

"The bees come often to see me, but when I ask them about the world they say they know nothing about it ; they have no time to think about anything but honey. So pray, little drop of water, tell me what you have seen."

And the little drop of water said, "Dear, beautiful flower, I will tell you all I know, for in all my travels I never met with any one fairer than you. But I must be quick, for there are thousands and thousands of us all having a race to the sea, and I cannot bear to be the last.

"I was born on a calm, starlight night, and I found myself resting in the bosom of a daisy. I looked round. There were thousands upon thousands just like myself, seeming to come out of the air, and to go to sleep on blades of grass and in the cups of flowers.

"I listened, and I heard a gurgling of water just below me, and then I could see that there was a tiny little rill pushing its way amongst the roots of the grass.

"Then there came a great light, and a little breeze went shivering all amongst the leaves and flowers. At that a thousand thousand sleepy drops woke up, and leaping into the little rill went hurrying along.

"I joined them, and we hastened on down glassy slopes facing the morning sun. I was so bright and glad then that I ran faster and faster, till I slid over a smooth, broad stone, and found myself in a deep, strong stream between high, woody banks.

Then, all at once, the world seemed to open out before me. For one moment I could look down a steep mountain height, and away over sunny fields, and waving woods, and curling smoke. For one moment only; then I was lost in a struggling, shouting, whirling maze of drops, that seemed to have lost their senses altogether.

“Some cried, ‘On with you! away!’ others cried, ‘Back!’ some said, ‘Here, this way!’ others said, ‘No, that way!’ But not one of us could help himself at all. I was dashed against a hard rock, flung back again, whirled round and round, pushed under a shelving stone, and then I took a leap right into the air.

“Away I went; I was not at all frightened, you know, because this was just the sort of thing I was born for.

“So I flew down, down, down through the air, and I felt the sunbeams rattling against me all the way; and then they would spring back and dance round me in circles of green and gold, and red and blue. You can have no idea how delightful it was.

“But it was soon over, and then I found myself at the bottom of a waterfall, in a broad and quiet river. Here I travelled on more leisurely for some time. Then I was suddenly

pushed into a narrow channel; and just as I was wondering how this was to end I was plunged into a deep, dark hole, where I had to grope and stumble amongst the spokes of a great wheel that went splashing round and round.

“There was a grumbling noise like thunder somewhere near, but I did not stop to find out what it was; I ran along as fast as I could, and was glad to find myself out in the broad river again.

“By and by we came to a town where large ships could float on the water. If you saw them you would wonder how little waterdrops such as we are could bear them up; but I suppose we must be very strong, for we felt them no weight at all.

“‘Now,’ we said to one another, ‘we shall soon reach the sea.’ But that was not quite so easy as we supposed; for suddenly we met a vast host of salt-water drops marching straight against us.

“‘Let us pass,’ we said, ‘for our home is in the sea.’

“But they would not listen; they came pouring along with resistless power, and drove us back for a mile or two.

“Then they suddenly turned and said, ‘Come along—it was only our fun.’

“And so we all swept out together amongst the rolling ocean waves.

“Oh, it is a free and glorious life there! No banks to bind you in, no channels to force you this way or that. Rising and falling, rolling and swaying hither and thither, springing into the air, playing with the sunbeams, and then plunging back into the heart of gloomy waves,—it is the heaven of waterdrops, to which we are always trying to get back.

“But I was not to stay there long that time; a vast foaming billow shook me off from its crest. A gust of wind caught me and carried me aloft.

“Then I fainted in the hot sun, and I remember nothing more till I woke again on a bank of silver cloud that glided before the wind towards the distant hills. It was beautiful to see the white-sailed ships flitting over the water, and the shadows of the clouds racing over the broad bright surface.

“But, as we floated on, we left the glorious sea behind. Nearer and nearer came the hills, growing darker as we approached. Then a cold, wet wind met us, and we all shivered and shook; and as we shivered we began to fall,

and knew that we were turned into a shower of rain.

“I fell into a rocky crevice, and groped my way along in the dark through many windings and turnings, till suddenly I felt a bustle and pushing all round me, and amongst a troop like myself I burst into the sunlight again, and raced after the rest round and round a rocky basin fringed with fern.

“After several mazy circles I found my way out, and was hurried along to the top of the fall that brought me to your feet.

“Farewell! farewell, little flower! Let me away to my heaven in the sea. God tells you to rest here, but to me he gives no rest except in the glorious sea. And so wherever I am, in cloud or rainbow, or stream or river, always the one thing I crave for is to get back to the sea.”

Then the drop fell, and I could see him no more.

THE LAND OF NOD.

Come, cuddle your head on my shoulder, dear,
Your head like the golden rod,
And we shall go sailing away from here
To the beautiful Land of Nod.

Away from life's hurry and worry and flurry,
Away from earth's shadow and gloom,
To a world of fair weather, we'll float off together
Where roses are always in bloom.

Just shut up your eyes and fold your hands,
Your hands like the leaves of a rose,
And we will go sailing to those fair lands
That never an atlas shows.
On the north and the west they are bounded by rest,
On the south and the east by dreams,
'Tis the country ideal, where nothing is real,
But everything only seems.

Just drop down the curtains of your dear eyes,
Those eyes like a bright blue-bell,
And we will sail out under star-lit skies
To the land where the fairies dwell.
Down the river of Sleep our barge will sleep,
Till it reaches that mystic isle
Which no man has seen, but where all have been,
And there we will pause awhile.

I will croon you a song as we float along
To that shore which is blessed of God,
Then ho! for that fair land, we're off to that rare
land,
That beautiful Land of Nod.

THE LAND OF NOD.

Do you know the way to the Land of Nod,
That city old and gray,
Where only at night the people awake
And at night the children play ?

I will tell you the way to that Land of Nod,
'Tis the pleasantest way that I know,
For you roll and roll, and roll and roll
Down the hills of long ago.

You lay you down on the sweet green grass
When the flowers are going to sleep ;
You shut your eyes and listen awhile
To the little night-bird's peep.

And then you roll, and roll and roll
Down into the valley so sweet,
Where the fireflies dance with their fairy lamps
While the angels their night watches keep.

Don't open your eyes or you won't get in
Past those sentries of drowsy sleep,
Who guard this city from waking eyes
And from even the eyes that peep.

Then hush ! and listen as down you roll,
For the gates are opening wide ;
You can hear the bells of the fairy elves
As far through the valley they ride.

Then roll and roll and roll and roll
Down into that valley so deep,
Where the fairies dance with their firefly lamps,
When the children are all asleep,
When the children are all asleep.

LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD.

Far away in the heart of the country, near a pretty village, there once lived a little girl. She was one of the sweetest and best children you ever saw.

Her mother loved her dearly, and her grandmother was very fond of her too. Grandma had given her darling a little hood of red velvet, and this became her so well, that every one who knew her always called her by the name of Little Red Riding-Hood.

Well, one day her mother baked a batch of cakes, and she said to Red Riding-Hood :—

“I hear your poor grandma has not been well lately ; so I want you to go, like a good child, to see if she is any better. Take this cake and a pot of butter with you.”

Little Red Riding-Hood, who was a dear willing child, put the things into a basket with great

care, and off she set. The house in which her grandma lived was on the other side of a thick wood.

On ran Little Red Riding-Hood ; but, just as she came to the wood, what should she meet but a great ugly wolf. The wolf would have liked to have eaten her up then and there ; but you must know, there were some wood-cutters close at hand, and they would soon have killed him in turn.

So the wolf trotted up to the little girl, and said as softly as he could, " Good morning, Little Red Riding-Hood."

" Good morning, Master Wolf," said she.

" And where may you be going so early ?" he asked.

" Oh, I'm going to grandma's," said Little Red Riding-Hood ; for she thought there was no harm in being civil.

" Indeed ! And what have you got in the basket, my pretty maid ?" asked the wolf, as he sniffed and sniffed at the lid.

" Oh," said she, " only a cake and a pot of butter ; for my granny is ill, you know."

" Dear me !" cried the wolf, " and where does she live, pray ?"

“Down by the mill, through the wood,” said she.

“Well, if that’s the case,” said the wolf, “I don’t mind going and seeing her too. I shall go by the road, now, *you* take the path through the wood, and let us see who will be there first.”

Away went the wolf, and he made all haste, as you may guess. Sure enough, he stood at granny’s door in a very short time.

Thump, thump, went the wolf at the door.

“Who’s there?” cried out grandma, from within.

Then the wolf said, in a small, child-like voice, “It’s only Little Red Riding-Hood; and I’ve brought you a cake and a pot of butter from mother.”

So grandma, who was in bed, cried out, “Pull the string, my dear, and it will lift the latch.”

This the great ugly wolf did, and in he went. As soon as he was in, he fell on the poor old woman, and ate her up in a minute. Next, he shut the door, put on grandma’s night-cap and night-gown, and got into the bed. Then he drew the curtains quite close, and hid his head on the pillow.

There the ugly wolf lay, how merry you can't think, licking his lips, and waiting for Little Red Riding-Hood.

All this while she toddled on through the wood, here plucking a wild flower, there picking some nice berries for her grandma. Then down she sat on a mossy bank to sort her flowers, red, blue, and yellow.

In a little while a wasp came up to her. He buzzed about, and at last dropped on Red Riding-Hood's posy of flowers.

"Sip away my poor little wasp; and take as much honey as you like," said Little Red Riding-Hood.

The wasp hummed his thanks, as he flew from flower to flower; and when he had sipped enough, away he sped.

Soon a little wren hopped up, and he began to peck with his wee bill at a berry. "Peck away, my little wren, as much as you like, only leave enough for grandma and me," said Riding-Hood.

"Tweet, tweet," said the wee wren, for "Thank you." So he ate his fill, and away he flew.

Now Little Red Riding-Hood thought it was high time for her to get on her way, so she

picked up her basket and set off. Soon she came to a brook, and there she saw an old woman, bent almost double.

“What are you looking for, Goody?” said the little girl.

“For water-cresses, my pretty chick,” said she; “and a poor trade it is, let me tell you.”

Little Red Riding-Hood gave Goody a bit of cake, saying, “Sit down, Goody, and eat. I will pick the water-cresses for you.” So the old woman sat down and ate the cake, while Riding-Hood got a heap of cresses.

“There’s a dear!” said Goody. “Now, if you meet the Green Huntsman on your way, tell him there’s game in the wind.”

That she would; and away went Red Riding-Hood, but when she looked round, the old woman was gone.

Little Red Riding-Hood looked everywhere for the Green Huntsman, but she could not see him, until at last, just as she was passing a still pool, she met him. He was all green from top to toe, so that she could not mistake him.

“Good morning, Master Huntsman,” said Little Red Riding-Hood. “The old water-cress woman bade me tell you that there’s game in the wind.”

The Green Huntsman nodded, but said nothing. He bent his ear to the ground, strung his bow and fitted an arrow, while Little Red Riding-Hood toddled away, trying to think what it could all mean.

In a short time she got to her grandma's house, and she tapped at the door.

"Who's there?" cried the wolf from within, in a queer, gruff sort of voice.

"It's only your grandchild Red Riding-Hood; and I've brought you a nice cake and a pot of fresh butter from mother."

Then said the wolf more mildly, "Pull the string, my dear, and it will lift the latch." So she did as she was bid, and in she went.

Now the wolf hid his head under the bed-clothes, and said, "Put the cake and pot of butter on the shelf, my pet, and then come and help me to get up."

Well, Little Red Riding-Hood did so, but when she came up to help her grandma, and drew back the curtains, she could not make out how her grandma had got so ugly. So she said,

"Dear me, grandma, what long arms you've got!"

"The better to hug you, my dear."

"But, grandma, what great eyes you've got!"

“The better to see you, my child.”

“But, grandma, what big teeth you’ve got!”

“The better to eat you up,” said the wolf, as he got ready to make a spring on her.

But, at that moment, the wasp, who had come into the house along with Riding-Hood, stung the wolf on the nose, so that he sneezed and sneezed again.

Then the little wren, who was sitting on the window-sill, when he heard this, said, “Tweet, tweet!”

And the Green Huntsman, who was outside, hearing the wren, let fly his arrow, and it struck the wolf through the heart, and killed him on the spot.

HIDE AND SEEK.

Now hide the flowers beneath the snow,
And Winter will not find them;
Their safety nooks he cannot know;
They left no tracks behind them.

The little brooks keep very still,
Safe in their ice-homes lying;
Let Winter seek them where he will,
There’s no chance for his spying.

Gone are the birds ; they're hiding where
The Winter never searches ;
Safe in the balmy Southern air,
They sing on sunlit perches.

But comes the Spring at last to look
For all her playmates hidden,
And one by one—flower, bird, and brook—
Shall from its place be bidden.

Then shall the world be glad and gay,
The birds begin their chorus,
The brooks sing, too, along their way,
And flowers spring up before us !

THE DAISY AND THE LARK.

Now listen ! In the country, close by the road-side, stood a pleasant house. You must have seen one like it very often.

In front lay a little garden, inclosed by a fence, and full of blossoming flowers. Near the hedge, in the soft green grass, grew a little daisy. The sun shone as brightly and warmly upon her as it shone upon the large and beautiful garden flowers.

The daisy grew from day to day. Every morning she unfolded her little white rays, and lifted up a little golden sun in the centre of her

blossom. She never remembered how little she was. She never thought that she was hidden down in the grass, while the tall beautiful flowers grew in the garden. She was too happy to care for such things. She lifted her face towards the warm sun, she looked up to the blue sky, and she listened to the lark singing high in the air.

One day the little daisy was as joyful as if it were a great holiday, and yet it was only Monday. The little children were at school. They sat at their desks learning their lessons. The daisy, on her tiny stem, was learning from the warm sun and the soft wind how good God is.

Then the lark sang his sweet song. It sounded just as she felt.

“How beautiful, how sweet the song is!” said the daisy. “What a happy bird to sing so sweetly and fly so high!” But she never dreamed of being sorry because she could not fly nor sing.

The tall garden flowers by the fence were very proud and conceited. The peonies thought it very grand to be so large, and puffed themselves out to be larger than the roses.

“See how bright my colors are!” said the tulips. And they stood bolt upright to be seen

more plainly. They did not notice the little daisy.

She said to herself, "How rich and beautiful they are? No wonder the pretty bird likes them. I am glad I can live near them."

Just then the lark flew down.

"Tweet, tweet, tweet," he cried, but he did not go near the peonies and tulips. He hopped into the grass near the lowly daisy. She trembled for joy. The little bird sang beside her: "Oh, what sweet, soft grass, and what a beautiful little flower, with gold in its heart and silver on its dress!"

How happy the little daisy felt! And the bird kissed it with his beak, sang to it, and then flew up into the blue air above.

The daisy looked up at the peonies and the tulips, but they were quite vexed, and turned their backs upon her. She did not care, she was so happy. When the sun was set, she folded up her leaves and went to sleep. All night long she dreamed of the warm sun and the pretty little bird.

The next morning, when she stretched out her white leaves to the warm air and the light, she heard the voice of the lark, but his song was sad.

Poor little lark ! He might well be sad : he had been made a prisoner in a cage that hung by the open window. He sang of the happy time when he could fly in the air, joyous and free.

The little daisy wished that she could help him. What could she do ? She forgot all the beautiful things about her,—the warm sunshine, the soft breeze, and the shining leaves. She could only think of the poor bird, and wish that she might help him.

Just then two boys came into the garden. They came straight to the daisy. One of them carried a sharp knife in his hand.

“We can cut a nice piece of turf for the lark, here,” he said.

And he cut a square piece of turf around the daisy, so that the little flower stood in the centre.

“How bright the daisy looks ! Let us leave it there.”

He carried the piece of turf with the daisy growing in it, and placed it in the lark’s cage. The poor bird was beating his wings against the iron bars of his cage, and the daisy wished that she could speak to him.

“There is no water here,” said the captive lark. “All have gone, and forgotten to give

me a drop of water to drink. My throat is hot and dry. I feel as if I were burning."

And he thrust his beak into the cool turf to refresh himself a little with the green grass. Within it was the daisy. He nodded to her, and kissed her with his beak.

"Poor little flower! Have you come here, too?"

"How I wish I could comfort him," said the daisy. And she tried to fill the air with perfume.

The poor bird lay faint and weak on the floor of the cage. His heart was broken. The daisy drooped, sick and sorrowful, towards the earth.

In the morning the boys came, and when they found the bird was dead, they wept many bitter tears. They dug a little grave for him, and covered it with flowers.

"Ah, if we had only cared for him before!" they said.

The daisy had given her little life to make the captive bird glad.

THE FROST.

The frost looked forth one still, clear night,
And whispered, "Now I shall be out of sight;
So through the valley and over the height,
In silence I'll make my way;

Then he flew to the mountain, and powdered its
crest ;
He lit on the trees, and their boughs he drest
In diamond beads ; and he did his best
To make all the world look gay.

He went to the windows of those who slept,
And over each pane like a fairy crept ;
Wherever he breathed, wherever he stepped,
By the light of the morn were seen

Most beautiful things ; there were flowers and trees ;
There were be vies of birds and swarms of bees ;
There were cities with temples and towers ; and
these
All pictured in silver sheen !

THE FEAST OF CHERRIES.

Three hundred years ago, says an old writer, cherries were very scarce in Germany. A strange disease came upon the fruit-trees, and the greater number of them died. But a rich merchant of Hamburg, named Wolff, who had a large garden in the middle of the city, had managed to keep his cherry trees free from this disease.

He had in his garden all the best kinds of trees then known, and he was able to sell his fruit for any price he liked to ask. His cherries were

worth almost their weight in gold, and he soon made a fortune out of them.

One spring-time, when his favorite trees were in full blossom, and gave good promise of a fine crop of fruit, a great war broke out. The German armies were defeated, and Hamburg was besieged. The leader of the enemy vowed that, as soon as he had taken the city, every man, woman, and child in it should be put to death.

While the people fought bravely against the enemy without the walls, a more terrible enemy appeared within; for food began to get scarce. In a few days more, the citizens must open their gates to their conquerors, or die of hunger.

But while those within the walls suffered from hunger, those encamped without were dying of thirst. The summer was very hot, and every spring and brook near their camp was dried up. The soldiers suffered much from want of water, while they had to endure the heat and smoke of battle, and often the pain of wounds.

Wolff, the merchant, returned slowly to his house one morning. Along with the other merchants of the city, he had been helping to defend the walls against the enemy; and so constant was the fighting, that for a whole week he had worn his armor day and night. And now he thought bitterly that all this fighting was useless,



FEAST OF CHERRIES.

for on the morrow want of food would force them to open the gates.

As he passed through his garden, he noticed that his cherry trees were covered with ripe fruit, so large and juicy that the very sight of it was refreshing. At that moment a thought struck him. He knew how much the enemy were suffering from thirst. What would *they* not give for the fruit that hung unheeded on the trees of his orchard? Might he not by means of his cherries secure safety for his city?

Without a moment's delay he put his plan into practice, for he knew there was no time to lose if the city was to be saved. He gathered together three hundred of the children of the city, all dressed in white, and loaded them with fruit from his orchard. Then the gates were thrown open, and they set out on their strange errand.

When the leader of the enemy saw the gates of the city open, and the band of little white-robed children marching out, many of them nearly hidden by the leafy branches which they carried, he at first thought that it was some trick by which the townspeople were trying to deceive him, while preparing for an attack on his camp. As the children came nearer, he remembered his cruel vow, and was on the point of giving orders that they should all be put to death.

But when he saw the little ones close at hand, so pale and thin from want of food, he thought of his own children at home, and he could hardly keep back his tears. Then, as his thirsty, wounded soldiers tasted the cool, refreshing fruit which the children had brought them, a cheer went up from the camp, and the general knew that he was conquered, not by force of arms, but by the power of kindness and pity.

When the children returned, the general sent along with them waggons laden with food for the starving people of the city; and next day he signed a treaty of peace with those whom he had vowed to destroy.

For many years afterwards, as the day came round on which this event took place, it was kept as a holiday, and called "The Feast of Cherries." Large numbers of children in white robes marched through the streets, each one bearing a branch with bunches of cherries on it. But the old writer who tells the story is careful to say, that on these occasions the children kept the cherries for themselves.

THE MILLER OF THE DEE.

There dwelt a miller hale and bold
Beside the river Dee ;
He worked and sang from morn to night,
No lark more blithe than he ;
And this the burden of his song
Forever used to be :
“I envy nobody ; no, not I,
And nobody envies me !”

“Thou ’rt wrong, my friend,” said old King Hal,
“As wrong as wrong can be ;
For could my heart be light as thine,
I’d gladly change with thee.
And tell me now, what makes thee sing,
With voice so loud and free,
While I am sad, though I’m the king,
Beside the river Dee.”

The miller smiled, and doffed his cap.
“I can earn my bread,” quoth he ;
“I love my wife, I love my friend,
I love my children three ;
I owe no penny I cannot pay,
I thank the river Dee
That turns the mill that grinds the corn,
To feed my babes and me.”

“Good friend,” said Hal, and sighed the while,
“Farewell! and happy be;
But say no more, if thou’dst be true,
That no one envies thee.
Thy mealy cap is worth my crown,
Thy mill my kingdom’s fee;
Such men as thou are England’s boast,
O miller of the Dee!”

THE SOWER AND THE SEED.

The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow, and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns: and the thorns sprung up and choked them. But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

THE QUEST.

There once was a restless boy
Who dwelt in a home by the sea,
Where the water danced for joy
And the wind was glad and free :
But he said, " Good mother, oh ! let me go ;
For the dullest place in the world, I know,
Is this little brown house,
This old brown house,
Under the apple tree.

" I will travel east and west ;
The loveliest homes I'll see ;
And when I have found the best,
Dear mother, I'll come for thee.
I'll come for thee in a year and a day,
And joyfully then we'll haste away
From this little brown house,
This old brown house,
Under the apple tree."

So he travelled here and there,
But never content was he,
Though he saw in lands most fair
The costliest homes there be.
He something missed from the sea or sky,
Till he turned again with a wistful sigh
To the little brown house,
The old brown house,
Under the apple tree.

Then the mother saw and smiled,
While her heart grew glad and free.
“Hast thou chosen a home, my child?
Ah, where shall we dwell?” quoth she.
And he said, “Sweet mother, from east to west,
The loveliest home, and the dearest and best,
Is a little brown house,
An old brown house,
Under an apple tree.”

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*.

And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own

beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him : and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves ?

And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

A BOY'S SONG.

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the gray trout lies asleep,
Up the river and o'er the lea—
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee—
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thickest, greenest,
There to trace the homeward bee—
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free—
That's the way for Billy and me.

There let us walk, there let us play,
Through the meadow, among the hay,
Up the water and over the lea—
That's the way for Billy and me.

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful—
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings—
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.

The purple-headed mountain,
The river running by,
The morning, and the sunset
That lighteth up the sky.

The tall trees in the greenwood,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden—
He made them, every one.

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who hath made all things well.

HOW I TURNED THE GRINDSTONE.

One cold, winter morning, when I was a little boy, I met on my way to school a smiling man with an axe on his shoulder.

“My pretty boy,” said he, “has your father a grindstone?”

“Yes, sir,” said I.

“You are a fine little fellow,” said the man: “will you let me grind my axe on it?”

It pleased me very much to be called a fine little fellow; so I said, “O, yes, sir: it is down in the shop.”

“And will you, my little man,” said he, patting me on the head, “get a little hot water?”

Now, how could I refuse? He was such a smiling, pleasant man! As fast as I could I ran into the house, and brought him a whole kettleful.

“How old are you?” and “What’s your name?” he asked. But before I could answer

he went on, "You are one of the finest lads I ever saw : will you just turn a few minutes for me ?"

Tickled with his praise, like a little fool, I went to work. It was a new axe ; and I toiled and tugged and turned till I was tired enough to drop.

The school bell rang, but I could not get away ; it rang again, and there I was still, turning away at the grindstone. My hands were blistered, and my shoulders ached.

At last the axe was ground. What a sharp, keen edge it had ! I remember how it shone in the winter sun.

Then I looked up, expecting thanks. But the man suddenly turned toward me with a frown, and said, "You little rascal, you have played truant ! Be off now : scud away to school, or you'll catch it !"

It was hard enough to turn a heavy grindstone so long, and on such a cold day ; but to be called a "little rascal" for doing it was too much. These harsh words sank deep into my boyish mind, and often have I thought of them since.

Boys and girls, whenever you meet a flatterer, beware of him. You may be pretty sure that he has "an axe to grind," and wants you to turn the grindstone.

HOW THE LEAVES CAME DOWN.

"I'll tell you how the leaves came down,"
The great tree to his children said,
"You're getting sleepy, yellow and brown—
Yes, very sleepy, little red,
It is quite time you went to bed."

"Ah!" begged each silly pouting leaf,
"Let us a little longer stay,
Dear father tree; behold our grief!
'Tis such a very pleasant day,
We do not want to go away."

So just for one more merry day
To the great tree the leaflets clung,
Frolicked and danced and had their way,
Upon the autumn breezes swung,
Whispering all their sports among.

"Perhaps the great tree will forget,
And let us stay until the spring,
If we all beg, and coax and fret."
But the great tree did no such thing,
He smiled to hear their whispering.

"Come, children, all to bed!" he cried,
And ere the leaves could urge their prayer
He shook his head, and far and wide,
Fluttering and rustling everywhere,
Down sped the leaflets through the air.

I saw them on the ground, they lay
Red and golden, a huddled swarm,
Waiting till one from far away
With bed-clothes heaped upon his arm,
Should come and wrap them soft and warm.

The great bare tree looked down and smiled ;
“ Good-night ! dear little ones,” he said,
And from below each sleepy child
Replied, “ Good-night,” and murmured
“ It is so nice to go to bed.”

—*Susan B. Coolidge (by permission of the publishers).*

THE HERO OF HAARLEM.

Far across the sea lies a country called Holland. If you visit that country some day, you will observe many strange things you will never see at home. Strangest of all will be the great dikes, or sea-walls, which keep the waters of the ocean from pouring over the land and drowning all the people. For Holland is a low country, and nothing but the strong dikes could keep the waves of the sea away from the doors of the people. You may imagine, then, how carefully these dikes are guarded.

One day long years ago, a little boy was playing in the garden, when his mother called him to run an errand. “ I have here,” she said,

“some cakes for the old blind man who lives beyond the dike. Bring them to him, and come back in time for supper.”

Gladly the little fellow departed on his errand. He delivered the cakes, rested a few minutes, and then taking up the empty basket set out for home. But the way was long, and it grew dark before he had reached the end of his walk.

But, hark! In the silence of the evening, as he was passing the very highest part of the dike, his ear caught the sound of running water. If we had been walking there we should have given little heed to such a sound; but the little Dutch boy knew what it meant. He knew that the sea was making its way through the dike. Before morning—even before he could get men to help—the water would be pouring in over the land.

What was he to do? Quick as a flash he ran to the spot from which the water flowed, and thrust his hand into the hole in the dike.

Then he called for help, but no one came. He called again, and listened, but still no answer. Again he shouted and waited, but there was no sound to break the silence. His voice grew fainter and fainter, and at last would not sound above a whisper. His hand became cold as ice, and the pain extended into his arm, and then into his whole body. Still he did not

move from his post ; for he saw that the water had ceased to flow. His little, half-frozen hand was holding back the great sea.

All night long he sat and waited ; he had no longer any power to call for help. In the morning they found him, with his hand still in the hole in the dike—but almost dead from cold and fatigue.

Is it any wonder that the people of Holland tell over and over again to their children the story of the little boy-hero of the dike ?

THE MAPLE.

On the topmost twig of a maple tree there grew a seed. In the springtime the gentle movement of the sap and the soft rustle of the leaves whispering among themselves had awakened him ; then, day by day, half sleeping and half conscious, he had fed upon what the roots provided, stretching himself lazily in the sunshine. Presently his wing began to unfold

“That is very curious,” said he, stirring a little. “It must be a mistake. I don’t flutter about like the bees.” That bit of wing, which seemed his, and not his, puzzled him. “It must belong to something else,” he thought. And afterward

he was always on the lookout for a bee or a dragon fly with only one wing. But none came.

The hot summer noons and the long moonlit nights became sultrier, and the leaves drooped. "How withered I am!" said the seed to his most intimate friend, a leaf that hung from a near bough. "It makes me feel quite brittle." But the leaf did not answer, for just then it fell from the twig with a queer, reluctant shiver to the ground.

"Ah!" murmured the maple seed, "I understand." So he was not surprised when a rude breeze twisted him off one day, and sent him spinning into space.

"Here I go," thought he, "and this is the end of it."

"Puff!" said the breeze, who had seen much of the world, and looked with contempt upon the untravelled. "Puff! how ignorant!" and he blew the seed right into a crack in the earth.

"It must be the end, for all that," insisted the seed. No wonder he thought so, for it was cold and dark where he lay. A troubled cloud leaned down and wept over him. Then he began to grow amazingly in the warmth and moisture.

"If this goes on," he thought, "I shall certainly burst, and then I must die. How is one to live, with a crack in his sides?"

But the maple seed was wrong. He did not die. An unsuspected, mysterious strength sustained him. His roots found food in the brown earth, and he lifted up a slender stem into the pure sunlight and warm air. Through spring, summer, autumn, and winter, year after year, this lived and grew, until the tiny sapling had become a beautiful tree, with spreading branches.

“Ah!” said the tree, “how stupid I was!”

It was very pleasant on the lawn. An old couple from the house near by came out in good weather to sit under the tree. They reminded him of some fragile leaves he had seen fluttering somewhere in the past. He was glad to have them come, and he kept his coolest shade for them. Partly for their sakes, he liked to have the robins sing in his branches.

The years went by. The old man tottered out alone to sit in the cool shadow. He was bent and sorrowful.

“Ah,” sighed the tree, “I know! I know! He has lost his leaf, and feels brittle. If I could only tell him this is not the end!”

After this, many sunny days came, but not the old man, and the tree concluded that he had been blown away. “If he only knew that he would grow again!” he said to himself.

“Unless one knows that, it is so uncomfortable to lie in the dark.”

A great storm came. The sky blackened, the winds blew with might, and the heavy rain fell. The maple was uprooted and broken. The next day there came men with axes, who cut the tree in pieces, and drew it to the house.

“Is this the end?” he questioned. But no,—the logs were piled one day in the fireplace in a large, sunny room. The old man leaned from his chair to warm his hands by the cheerful heat the crimson flame gave out. “Is it the maple?” he said. “Ah! this goes with the rest.”

The fire grew brighter, burned duller, turned to embers, smouldered to ashes. The hearth was cold. The figure was sitting still in the arm-chair, but the old man himself had blown away.

The spirit of the maple tree whispered, “Does he know? There is *no* end!”

THE BEAR AND THE BEES.

Some bears, going out for a walk one day,

Discovered in one of the trees

A hive full of honey, which smelt very fine,

So they stopped to make friends with the bees.

The old bear bowed low and said, “Brum, Brum;”

And the lady-bee answered, “Hum, Hum, Hum.”

"Madam Bee," said the bear to the fair little queen,
"Yourself I am happy to meet!

I hope you'll invite me to share in your feast,
I'm exceedingly fond of what's sweet!"

And he tried to smile with his "Brum, Brum, Brum;"
But the bees all frowned with their "Hum, Hum, Hum."

Then the queen bee haughtily raised her head,
As she sat on her leafy throne,

And said, "Mr. Bear, as you very well know,
We bees prefer dining alone!"

Then the bear looked cross, and grunted, "Brum, Brum;"
But the bees all smiled, and applauded, "Hum, Hum."

"Heigh-ho! Mrs. Bee," said the angry bear,

"You will please to bear this in mind,

There is nothing to hinder my taking it *all*,

Since you do not choose to be kind!"

And he stalked about with a loud "Brum, Brum;"

But the bees only laughed a low "Hum, Hum."

Then the bear began to climb up the tree:

But the queen, in her firmest tone,

Called out, "Mr. Bear, I must warn you now,

You had better let *us* alone—

We are all fully armed;" but the bear sneered, "Brum!"

And the bees all savagely buzzed, "Hum, Hum!"

The soldier-bees drew out their sharp keen knives;

While the little bees giggled with glee,

"Oh, what a sore nose you will have, Mr. Bear,

When you scramble down out of this tree!"

But the bear glared in rage while he growled, "Brum,
Brum,"

And the sturdy young bees piped a saucy "Hum, Hum."

Nearer he crept to the coveted prize ;

But that prize he was never to gain,

For the knives pierced his nose, and his ears, and his
eyes,

Till he howled with the smart and the pain :

Down he went to the ground with a sad "Brum, Brum,"

While the bees in their triumph sang, "Hum, Hum,
Hum !"

"Now then, Mr. Bear," said the sage little queen,

"If you would be healthy and wise,

You must learn not to think quite so much of yourself,

And all others you must not despise !"

And the bear marched off with a sullen "Brum, Brum,"

While the busy bees buzzed with a pleasant "Hum, Hum."

THE ADVENTURE IN THE WOODS.

It had been raining very heavily. The fir-trees shook their heads. "We should never have thought it would be like this," they said. The drops fell from the trees on the bushes, from the bushes on the ferns, and then ran away in countless little streams among the rocks and mosses.

The rain had begun in the afternoon, and it was already dark. The green frog, who had been taking another look at the weather before going to bed, said to his neighbor : "It will not stop before to-morrow." The ant, who had

gone for a walk in the woods, was of the same opinion. She sighed and complained at each step she took. "My dress is all spoiled," she said, "and my hat, too. If I had only an umbrella or overshoes, it would not be so bad; but it is so unpleasant to be out in this cold rain without any protection!"

As she was talking to herself in this way, she saw right in front of her a large mushroom. "This is splendid," she cried out. "It is just as fine a shelter as one could wish. I can stay here till it stops raining. And it does not appear that any one lives here. So much the better! Surely I am in luck."

She was just in the act of settling herself for the night when she heard a slight noise, and looking up she saw a little cricket standing at the door. On his back he carried his little violin. "If you please, Mrs. Ant," said the cricket, "may I come in?" "Come right in," answered the ant. "I am very glad to have good company on such a night as this. Just hang up your violin, and take a seat." "Thank you very much, Mrs. Ant. I am really very tired. I was playing all day at the fair in the forest, and now I have been caught in this terrible storm. You are very kind, indeed, to let me come in."

The two had not been sitting there very long when they saw a tiny light shining in the distance. As it came nearer they perceived that it was from a lantern which a glow-worm carried in his hand. "Good evening!" he began. "Might I stay here over night? I was on my way to see my cousin down at the brook, but I lost my way, and really I do not know where I am." "Come right in," said the other two. "It will be splendid to have a light on such a night as this." The glow-worm placed his lantern on the table, and seated himself on the driest leaf he could find.

Soon they heard somebody stumbling towards them over the leaves and the moss. It was a big black beetle. "Well! well!" he began, in his coarse voice. "I am right, after all. This is the inn. I am glad to have reached it." Then he pulled out his satchel, and began to devour his supper, muttering to himself,— "When a fellow has been out all day, boring through wood, he gets an appetite." Then he borrowed a light from the glow-worm, lit his pipe, and began to smoke quite comfortably.

It grew darker than ever, and the weather seemed worse. Then, to the astonishment of all, a new guest walked in. It was a snail, with her house on her back. "That's what I call

running!" she began. "Really, I am out of breath, and I have a stitch in my side. I was going down to the next village, but you know one cannot do more than she is able, especially when she carries her house with her. If the company does not object, I shall stay here over night, and run the balance of my journey in the morning."

As no one objected, the snail stretched herself on the floor, pulled out her knitting needles and began to knit.

The five were thus comfortably situated when the ant opened up a conversation, by suggesting that they should have some fun. "I see that Mr. Cricket has his violin with him. If he is not too tired, perhaps he would play us a piece; then we could have a dance. It would keep us warm, and the time would not grow so heavy on our hands." Everybody agreed to this proposal. So the cricket placed himself in the middle, and played the merriest tune he knew by heart, while the others danced around him. The snail, to be sure, did not dance very much. "You know," she said, "it makes me dizzy when I whirl around so fast, and really I prefer to look on."

Now the mushroom under which the little people were dancing, belonged to an old toad.

In fine weather she used to sit on the roof, but when bad weather came she crept under the mushroom, and then it might rain from Easter to Christmas for all she cared. This toad had gone in the afternoon to visit her cousin, the water-snake, and they had so much to talk about that it grew quite dark before she set out for home. As she neared the mushroom she heard the noise of the dancers, and slipping in quietly, she was in their midst before they were aware of her presence.

This was an unexpected disturbance. The beetle fell on his back with fright, and it was five minutes before he could get on his legs again. The little glow-worm thought, but too late, that he should have put out his lantern. The cricket dropped his violin in the middle of a measure. The poor little ant went into one fainting fit after another. The snail, who is not easily excited, had palpitation of the heart. But she knew what to do. She crept into her little house, locked the door and said to herself, "Let come what will! I am not at home to any one!"

How the toad did scold the poor little people! "Do you think my house is a shelter for tramps and travelling musicians? A person cannot leave home for a few minutes, but some one is sure to

break in. Pack up your things and go! Never let me see you around here again! Get off!"

There was nothing to be done but to set out in the rain. So they gathered up their belongings and away they went.

What a sorrowful procession! The glow-worm took the lead to light the way, then came the beetle, then the ant, then the cricket, and last of all the snail. The beetle, who had good lungs, kept shouting from time to time, "Is there any tavern here?" But all his cries were in vain. After wandering around for a long time they found a tolerably dry place under the root of a tree. There they spent the remainder of the night very uncomfortably, and without much sleep.

And though they got off with their lives, it was a very narrow escape. Those who were in the adventure will remember it as long as they live.

THE VOICE OF THE GRASS.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
By the dusty roadside,
On the sunny hillside,
Close to the noisy brook,
In every shady nook,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere ;
All round the open door
Where sit the aged poor ;
Here, where the children play
In the bright and merry May,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere ;
In the noisy city street
My pleasant face you'll meet,
Cheering the sick at heart,
Toiling his busy part ;
Silently creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere ;
You can not see me coming,
Nor hear my low, sweet humming ;
For in the starry night,
And the glad morning light,
I come quietly, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere ;
More welcome than the flowers
In summer's pleasant hours ;
The gentle cow is glad,
And the merry bird not sad
To see me creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere ;
When you're numbered with the dead
In your still and narrow bed,
In the happy spring I'll come
And deck your silent home,
Creeping, silently creeping, everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere ;
My humble song of praise
Most joyfully I raise
To Him at whose command
I beautify the land ;
Creeping, silently creeping, everywhere.

THE PRINCE'S LESSON.

There was once a little English prince named Henry. His father tried to make him happy by giving him many toys, and a pony and a boat.

But the prince was not happy. He thought only of himself, and he kept wishing for things he had not, instead of trying to use properly those he had.

A wise man named Sir Arthur visited the king one day, and seeing how unhappy Prince Henry was, by the frown on his face, said to his father : "I can make your boy smile instead of frown if you let him visit me for a few months."

"If you can," said the king, "I will give you anything you ask."

Prince Henry went home with Sir Arthur that day. When they reached Sir Arthur's castle, he said : "I have a flower bed that talks."

"What does it say? How does it talk?" asked the prince in surprise.

"It has a secret which it tells to those who watch it every day," said Sir Arthur.

"Where is it?" said Prince Henry.

"Right before you," Sir Arthur replied.

The prince could see only a bed that had just been finished, in which nothing was yet growing.

"Come every day, and when it is ready it will tell you its secret," said Sir Arthur.

The prince came every day and watched and waited for the secret, and at last one day he saw a great many little plants peeping up through the ground. They grew so as to form words, and this is the secret they told Henry, "Do a kindness to some one every day."

The prince did what the flower bed had told him to do, and he soon learned to smile instead of frown.

THE BROWN THRUSH.

There's a merry brown thrush sitting up in the tree :

He is singing to you ! he is singing to me !

And what does he say, little girl, little boy ?

"Oh, the world's running over with joy !

Don't you hear ? don't you see ?

Hush ! look here ! in my tree

I am as happy as happy can be."

And the brown thrush keeps singing "A nest, do you see,
And five eggs hid by me in the big cherry tree?
Don't meddle, don't touch, little girl, little boy,
Or the world will lose some of its joy!
Now I'm glad! now I'm free!
And I always shall be,
If you never bring any sorrow to me."

So the merry brown thrush sings away in the tree,
To you and to me—to you and to me;
And he sings all the day, little girl, little boy—
"Oh, the world's running over with joy!
But long it won't be,
Don't you know? don't you see?
Unless we're as good as can be."

HOW A DOG SAVED A CREW.

A heavy gale was blowing, when a vessel was seen drifting toward the coast of Kent. She struck on the beach, and the breaking waves dashed over her in foam.

Eight men were seen holding on to the wreck, but no ordinary boat could go to their aid in such a sea; and in those days there were no life-boats—at least there were none on that part of the coast.

The people on shore feared every moment that the poor sailors would be washed off the ship and drowned ; for although the ship was not far from the land, it was too far for any one to swim through the foaming breakers.

If a rope could be taken from the wreck to the shore, the sailors might be saved. How could this be done ? A gentleman, who was standing on the beach with a large Newfoundland dog by his side, thought he saw how it could be managed.

He put a short stick in his dog's mouth, and then pointed to the vessel. The brave dog knew what his master wanted, and, springing into the sea, he fought his way bravely through the waves.

When he reached the ship, he tried to climb up its sides, but in vain. He was seen, however, by the crew, and they made fast a light rope to another piece of wood, which they threw toward him.

The wise animal again seemed to understand what was meant, and, seizing this piece of wood, he turned his head towards the shore to carry it to his master.

This time the wind and waves helped him on his way ; but he was almost worn out when he reached the shore, dragging the rope after him.

A stronger rope was then tied to the first one by the sailors, and one end of it was pulled on shore. Along this rope the sailors made their way one by one to the land, and in this way every man on board was saved, through the courage and wisdom of the dog.

By next day the storm was over, and the sailors were able to row out to their ship and save a large part of the cargo. A week afterwards, they got the ship itself off the rocks, and took it into harbor to be repaired.

Some of you may have seen a rocket. When it is fired, it sails away up into the sky with a long train of sparks behind it. It is by large rockets fired from the shore, with a strong line fastened to them, that we now get a rope carried to such a wreck.

ROBERT OF LINCOLN.

Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat :
 “ Bob-o’-link ! Bob-o’-link !
 Spink, spank, spink ;
Never was I afraid of man ;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can !
 Chee, chee, chee.”

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple—a pretty sight !
There, as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might ;
“ Bob-o’-link ! Bob-o’-link !
Spink, spank, spink ;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.”

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food.
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood :—
“ Bob-o’-link ! Bob-o’-link !
Spink, spank, spink ;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.”

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care
Off his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air :—
“ Bob-o’-link ! Bob-o’-link !
Spink, spank, spink ;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.”

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes,
 "Bob-o'-link! Bob-o'-link!
 Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
 Chee, chee, chee."

THE BEATITUDES.

Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

THE KING AND THE PAGE.

A celebrated Prussian general was in his youth a page in the court of Frederick the Great. His father was dead, and his widowed mother could barely support herself. He was anxious to help her, but could spare nothing from his meagre pay.

At last, however, he found a means of earning something for her. Each night one of the servants had to keep watch in the ante-room of the king's sleeping apartment, in order to wait upon him if he desired anything. This was a wearisome task to many, and they willingly gave over their watch to others, when it came their turn. The poor page began to take over these night watches for others. He was paid, of course, and the money thus obtained he sent to his mother.

One night the king could not sleep, and wished to have something read aloud to him. He rang his bell, he called—but no one came. At last he arose and went into the ante-room to see if a servant were there. Here he found the page seated at a table, sound asleep. Before him lay a letter to his mother, which he had begun to write.

The king stepped to the table and read the beginning of the letter—"My own dear precious

mother—This is now the third night I have been watching for money, and I am very tired. But I am glad that I have earned another dollar, which I enclose.”

Touched by the youth's goodness, the king permitted him to sleep on. He returned to his room, took two rolls of ducats, put one in each of the lad's pockets and then went back to bed.

When the page awoke and found the money in his pockets, he knew very well who put it there. In the morning he came before the king and begged forgiveness for his faulty service. At the same time he thanked him for the present to his mother.

The king praised him for his filial love, and advanced him to a better position. He rose higher and higher in the service, and finally became one of the best known generals in the army.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence :
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall !
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall !

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair ;
If I try to escape, they surround me ;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine !

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all ?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away !

FIVE PEAS IN A POD.

There were once five peas in one pod. They were green, and the pod was green ; so they thought the whole world was green.

The sun shone and warmed the pod. It was mild and pleasant in the day-time, and dark at night, of course.

The peas grew bigger and bigger. They thought a great deal, wondering what they should do by and by.

“ Must we sit here forever ? ” asked one. “ I think there must be something outside of our shell. I am sure of it.”

Weeks passed by. The peas became yellow, and the shell became yellow, too.

“All the world is turning yellow,” said they.

Perhaps they were right.

Suddenly something pulled the pod. It was torn off and held in human hands. Then it was dropped into a jacket pocket, with other pods.

“Now we shall soon be opened,” said one. “That is just what I want.”

“I should like to know which one of us will travel farthest,” said the smallest pea. “We shall soon see, now.”

“What is to happen will happen,” said the largest pea.

“Crack!” went the pod, as it burst. The five peas rolled out into the bright sunshine. There they lay in a child’s hand.

A little boy was holding them fast. He said they were fine peas for his pea shooter. So saying, he put one in, and shot it forth.

“Now I am flying out into the wide world,” said the pea. “Catch me if you can!” He was gone in a moment.

“I shall fly straight to the sun,” said the second pea. “That is a pod which will suit me exactly.” Away he went.

“We shall go farther than the others,” said the next two. And away they went.

“What is to happen will happen,” said the last of the five, as he was shot out of the pea shooter.

As he spoke, he flew up against an old board, under a garret window. He fell into a crack, which was almost filled with moss and soft earth. The moss closed over him. There he lay, a little captive. But God saw him.

“What is to happen will happen,” said the pea to himself.

In the garret lived a poor woman. She went out every day to work for her living. She had one little daughter, who was very sick. All winter long the sick child lay in her bed, patient and quiet. She was alone all day, while her mother was away at work.

Spring came. One morning, early, the sun shone brightly through the little window. He threw his rays over the floor of the sick room. The mother was going to her work, when the child cried,—

“Oh, mother! look out of the window. What can that little green thing be? It is moving in the wind.”

The mother went to the window and opened it.

“Oh!” she said. “Here is a little pea grow-

ing up. It has really taken root, and is putting out its green leaves. How could it have found its way into this crack? Now you will have a little garden to amuse you." So saying, the mother drew the bed nearer to the window, that the sick child might see the budding plant. Then she went to her work.

"Mother, I believe I shall get well," said the child, when her mother came home in the evening. "The sun has been so bright and warm to-day, and the little pea is growing so well. I think I shall get better, too, and go out into the warm sunshine."

"God grant it!" said the mother, as she kissed her child. Then she brought a little stick to prop the tiny plant which had given her daughter such hope.

She tied a piece of string to the window sill, so that the little pea tendrils might twine round it when they grew up. Indeed, they seemed to grow from day to day.

"Here is a flower coming!" said the mother, one morning. And now she began to hope that her little girl would get well. The little girl raised her head to look at her garden, with its one pea plant.

A week after, she sat up for the first time, for a whole hour. She was quite happy as she sat

by her window in the warm sunshine, while the little pea plant on the roof bore one pink blossom.

The child kissed the tender leaves gently. This was her Thanksgiving Day.

“Our Heavenly Father himself has planted that pea, and made it grow and blossom to bring joy to you and hope to me, my blessed child,” said the happy mother. And she smiled at the flower as if it had been an angel.

But what became of the other peas? Why, the one who cried, “Catch me, if you can!” fell on the roof of a house, and ended his days in the crop of a pigeon. The next two were also eaten by pigeons, so they were of some use.

The fourth, who started to reach the sun, fell into the gutter.

The young girl stood at the garret window, with bright eyes and rosy cheeks. She folded her thin hands over the pea blossom, and thanked God for sending it to her lonely room.

THE SANDPIPER.

Across the lonely beach we flit,
One little sandpiper and I;
And fast I gather bit by bit,
The scattered driftwood, bleached and dry.

The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,—
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds
Scud black and swift across the sky;
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
Stand out the white lighthouses high.
Almost as far as eye can reach
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach,—
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry;
He starts not at my fitful song,
Nor flash of fluttering drapery.
He has no thought of any wrong;
He scans me with a fearless eye;
Staunch friends are we, well tried and strong,
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!
To what warm shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky;
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?

—*Celia Thaxter (by permission of the publishers).*

THE STARS IN THE SKY.

Once on a time and twice on a time, and all times together as ever I heard tell of, there was a tiny lassie who would weep all day to have the stars in the sky to play with ; she wouldn't have this, and she wouldn't have that, but it was always the stars she would have. So one fine day off she went to find them. And she walked and she walked and she walked, till by-and-by she came to a mill-dam.

“Gooden to you,” says she ; “I’m seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Have you seen any ?”

“Oh, yes, my bonnie lassie,” said the mill-dam. “They shine in my own face o’ nights till I can’t sleep for them. Jump in and perhaps you’ll find one.”

So she jumped in, and swam about and swam about and swam about, but ne’er a one could she see. So she went on till she came to a brooklet.

“Gooden to you, Brooklet, Brooklet,” says she ; “I’m seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Have you seen any ?”

“Yes, indeed, my bonnie lassie,” said the Brooklet. “They glint on my banks at night. Paddle about, and maybe you’ll find one.”

So she paddled and she paddled and she paddled, but ne'er a one did she find. So on she went till she came to the Good Folk.

"Gooden to you, Good Folk," says she; "I'm looking for the stars in the sky to play with. Have ye seen e'er a one?"

"Why, yes, my bonnie lassie," said the Good Folk. "They shine on the grass here o' night. Dance with us, and maybe you'll find one."

And she danced and she danced and she danced, but ne'er a one did she see. So down she sate; I suppose she wept.

"Oh dearie me, oh dearie me," says she, "I've swam and I've paddled and I've danced, and if ye'll not help me I shall never find the stars in the sky to play with."

But the Good Folk whispered together, and one of them came up to her and took her by the hand and said, "If you won't go home to your mother, go forward, go forward; mind you take the right road. Ask Four Feet to carry you to No Feet at all, and tell No Feet at all to carry you to the stairs without steps, and if you can climb that——"

"Oh, shall I be among the stars in the sky then?" cried the lassie.

"If you'll not be, then you'll be elsewhere," said the Good Folk, and set to dancing again.

So on she went again with a light heart, and by-and-by she came to a saddled horse, tied to a tree.

“Gooden to you, Beast,” said she; “I’m seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Will you give me a lift, for all my poor bones are a-aching.”

“Nay,” said the horse, “I know nought of the stars in the sky, and I’m here to do the bidding of the Good Folk, and not my own will.”

“Well,” said she, “it’s from the Good Folk I come, and they bade me tell Four Feet to carry me to No Feet at all.”

“That’s another story,” said he; “jump up and ride with me.”

So they rode and they rode and they rode, till they got out of the forest and found themselves at the edge of the sea. And on the water in front of them was a wide glistening path running straight out towards a beautiful thing that rose out of the water and went up into the sky, and was all the colors in the world, blue and red and green, and wonderful to look at.

“Now get you down,” said the horse; “I’ve brought you to the end of the land, and that’s as much as Four Feet can do. I must away home to my own folk.”

“But,” said the lassie, “where’s No Feet at all, and where’s the stairs without steps?”

“I know not,” said the horse, “it’s none of my business either. So gooden to you, bonnie lassie;” and off he went.

So the lassie stood still and looked at the water, till a strange kind of fish came swimming up to her feet.

“Gooden to you, big Fish,” says she; “I’m looking for the stars in the sky, and for the stairs that climb up to them. Will you show me the way?”

“Nay,” said the Fish, “I can’t, unless you bring me word from the Good Folk.”

“Yes, indeed,” said she. “They said Four Feet would bring me to No Feet at all, and No Feet at all would carry me to the stairs without steps.”

“Ah, well,” said the Fish; “that’s all right, then. Get on my back and hold fast.”

And off he went—Kerplash!—into the water, along the silver path, towards the bright arch. And the nearer they came the brighter the sheen of it, till she had to shade her eyes from the light of it.

And as they came to the foot of it, she saw it was a broad bright road, sloping up and away into the sky, and at the far, far end of it she could see wee shining things dancing about.

“ Now,” said the Fish, “ here you are, and yon’s the stair : climb up, if you can, but hold on fast. I’ll warrant you’ll find the stairs easier at home than by such a way ; ’twas ne’er meant for lassies’ feet to travel ;” and off he splashed through the water.

So she clomb and she clomb and she clomb, but ne’er a step higher did she get : the light was before her and around her and the water behind her, and the more she struggled the more she was forced down into the dark and the cold, and the more she clomb the deeper she fell.

But she clomb and she clomb, till she got dizzy in the light and shivered with the cold, and dazed with the fear ; but still she clomb, till at last, quite dazed and silly-like, she let clean go, and sank down—down—down.

And bang she came on to the hard boards, and found herself sitting, weeping and wailing, by the bedside at home all alone.

—*More English Fairy Tales—Jacobs (by permission of the publishers).*

THE BROOK AND THE WAVE.

The brooklet came from the mountain,
As sang the bard of old,
Running with feet of silver
• Over the sands of gold !

Far away in the briny ocean
There rolled a turbulent wave,
Now singing along the sea-beach,
Now howling along the cave.

And the brooklet has found the billow,
Though they flowed so far apart,
And has filled with its freshness and sweetness
That turbulent, bitter heart !

THE DANDELION.

Gay little dandelion
Lights up the meads,
Swings on her slender foot,
Telleth her beads,
Lists to the robin's note
Poured from above ;
Wise little dandelion
Asks not for love.

Cold lie the daisy banks
Clothed but in green,
Where, in the days a-gone,
Bright hues were seen.
Wild pinks are slumbering,
Violets delay ;
True little dandelion
Greeteth the May.

Brave little dandelion !

Fast falls the snow,
Bending the daffodil's
Haughty head low.
Under that fleecy tent,
Careless of cold,
Blithe little dandelion
Counteth her gold.

Meek little dandelion
Groweth more fair,
Till dies the amber dew
Out from her hair.
High rides the thirsty sun,
Fiercely and high ;
Faint little dandelion
Closeth her eye.

Pale little dandelion,
In her white shroud,
Heareth the angel breeze
Call from the cloud !
Tiny plumes fluttering
Make no delay ;
Little winged dandelion
Soareth away.

DAMON AND PYTHIAS.

A young man named Pythias had done something to offend Dionysius the tyrant. For this offence he was cast into prison and condemned to die.

His home was far away, and he wished very much to see his father and mother and his friends before he died. So he determined to ask Dionysius to grant him permission to visit his home. "Let me say good-bye to those I love," he said, "and then I will come back and give up my life."

But the tyrant only laughed at him. "How am I to know that you will keep your promise?" he asked. "You wish to cheat me, and save yourself. No! no! you must go back to prison and await your doom."

A young man, brave and handsome, named Damon, then spoke. "O King! put me into prison in place of my friend Pythias, and let him go to his country to put his affairs in order and bid his friends farewell. He will come back as he promised, for he was never known to break his word. But if he is not here on the day which you have appointed for his death, I will die in his stead."

The tyrant was surprised that anybody should make such an offer, but he at last agreed to free the prisoner and permit Damon to take his place.

Time passed, and the day drew near on which Pythias was to die. Yet he had not come back, nor had any message been received from him. The guards were ordered to keep a closer watch on Damon, lest he should endeavor to escape. But this precaution was unnecessary. He had such faith in the truth and honor of his friend that he said, "He is sure to return; but if he does not, it will not be his fault. It will be because he is detained against his will."

At last the fatal day came, and then the very hour. The jailer came to lead Damon to his death. Even then he expressed his confidence in Pythias, saying that something had happened to prevent his return, and that he was only too pleased to be able to die for him. His own life, he said, was no dearer to him than the life of his friend.

Just as he was setting out from prison, Pythias rushed in, hot and breathless. He had been delayed by storms and shipwreck, and was almost too late. Throwing himself into Damon's arms, he wept tears of joy because his friend's life was spared. Then he gave himself up to the jailer and asked to be led to his death.

Dionysius was not so bad but that he could see good in others. He felt that lives like those of Damon and Pythias were too noble to be taken away, and calling them to him he set them both free. "Would that I had in all the world one friend like you!" he said. "He would be more to me than all my wealth."

LITTLE SORROW.

Among the thistles on the hill,
In tears sat Little Sorrow :
"I see a black cloud in the west ;
'Twill bring a storm to-morrow.
And when it storms, where shall I be ?
And what will keep the rain from me ?
Woe's me !" said Little Sorrow.

"But now the air is soft and sweet,
The sunshine bright," said Pleasure ;
"Here is my pipe : if you will dance,
I'll wake my merriest measure ;
Or, if you choose, we'll sit beneath
The red rose-tree, and twine a wreath.
Come, come with me," said Pleasure,

“Oh, I want neither dance nor flowers—
They’re not for me,” said Sorrow,
“When that black cloud is in the west,
And it will storm to-morrow !
And if it storm, what shall I do ?
I have no heart to play with you—
Go ! go !” said Little Sorrow.

But lo ! when came the morrow’s morn,
The clouds were all blown over ;
The lark sprang singing from his nest
Among the dewy clover ;
And Pleasure called : “Come out and dance !
To-day you mourn no evil chance ;
The clouds have all blown over !”

“And if they have, alas ! alas !
Poor comfort that !” said Sorrow ;
“For if to-day we miss the storm,
’Twill surely come to-morrow,
And be the fiercer for delay ;
I am too sore at heart to play—
Woe’s me !” said Little Sorrow.

GRACE DARLING.

It was a dark September night. An awful storm was raging on the sea. The lighthouse-keeper and his daughter lay awake listening to the angry beating of the surf upon the rocks, for on such a night sleep was impossible. For

many years had they lived a lonely life on their little island, yet rarely had they known a storm so severe as this.

As they listened, the quick ear of the young girl caught a new sound. It was the cry of men in distress, calling for assistance. All night long the two watchers could hear that cry above the roaring of the wind and waves, and yet it was so dark they could see nothing. Neither could they render any help. But they knew that a boat was on the rocks, and they pictured to themselves the men and women clinging to the ropes and masts.

When morning came they saw across the raging sea, about a mile away, a broken wreck, with people hanging to the rigging. "Father, we must try to save them!" said the brave young girl. "Let us get out the boat at once." "No, no, Grace!" was the answer. "Our boat would not live in such a sea. We could not reach them. Yet we cannot stay here and see them perish."

"Quick, then!" said Grace, and in a few minutes they were out on the billows in the heavy lighthouse boat. Grace pulled one oar and her father the other, and they made straight for the wreck.

It was hard rowing against such a sea, and it seemed as if they would never reach the place.

But at last they found themselves at the broken vessel. Here the danger was greater than ever. The waves dashed over the rocks and threatened every moment to engulf them. After many trials the father climbed upon the wreck, while Grace by her strength and skill kept the boat in place.

One by one the worn out sufferers were helped on board, and then the lighthouse-keeper clambered back into his place. Strong arms grasped the oars, the boat was turned towards shore, and soon all were safe in the lighthouse.

Here Grace took charge of the shipwrecked men, nursing them until the storm had passed away and they were strong enough to leave for their own homes.

It is many years since this happened, but the name of Grace Darling will never be forgotten. If you ever go to England, you may visit a little churchyard near the sea on the Eastern coast. Here is to be found the grave of the brave girl who risked her life to save the lives of others.

HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD.

By the shores of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them ;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

There the wrinkled, old Nokomis
Nursed the little Hiawatha,
Rocked him in his linden cradle,
Bedded soft in moss and rushes,
Safely bound with reindeer sinews ;
Stilled his fretful wail by saying :
 “ Hush ! the Naked Bear will get thee ! ”
Lulled him into slumber, singing,
 “ Ewa-yea ! my little owlet !
Who is this, that lights the wigwam ?
With his great eyes lights the wigwam ?
Ewa-yea ! my little owlet ! ”

Many things Nokomis taught him
Of the stars that shine in heaven ;
Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet,
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses ;
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits,
Warriors with their plumes and war-clubs.

Flaring far away to northward
In the frosty nights of Winter ;
Showed the broad, white road in heaven,
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows,
Running straight across the heavens,
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows.

At the door on summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha,
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the water,
Sounds of music, words of wonder ;
 " Minne-wawa ! " said the pine-trees,
 " Mudway-aushka ! " said the water.

Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes ;
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him :

 " Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly,
Little, flitting, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids ! "

Saw the moon rise from the water
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered, " What is that, Nokomis ? "
And the good Nokomis answered :

"Once a warrior, very angry,
 Seized his grandmother, and threw her
 Up into the sky at midnight;
 Right against the moon he threw her;
 'Tis her body that you see there."

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
 In the Eastern sky the rainbow,
 Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
 And the good Nokomis answered:

"'Tis the heaven of flowers you see there;
 All the wild flowers of the forest,
 All the lilies of the prairie,
 When on earth they fade and perish,
 Blossom in that heaven above us."

When he heard the owls at midnight,
 Hooting, laughing in the forest,
 "What is that?" he cried in terror;
 "What is that?" he said, "Nokomis?"
 And the good Nokomis answered:
 "That is but the owl and owlet,
 Talking in their native language,
 Talking, scolding at each other."

Then the little Hiawatha
 Learned of every bird its language,
 Learned their names and all their secrets,
 How they built their nests in Summer,
 Where they hid themselves in Winter,
 Talked with them whene'er he met them,
 Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

ARNOLD WINKELRIED.

An army was marching into Switzerland. If it were not driven back the towns would be burned, the farmers would lose their sheep and their grain, and the people would be made slaves to the conquerors.

The men of Switzerland knew their danger, and they determined to defend their homes and their lives. So they came from the mountains and the valleys, and banded themselves together to resist the invaders. They had no guns or swords like their enemies, but some carried bows and arrows, some had scythes or pitchforks, and some had only sticks and heavy clubs.

As the invading army marched along they kept in line, and stood close together. Nothing could be seen but their shields and the points of their spears, or their shining armor.

The Swiss bowmen shot their arrows, but they glanced from the shields of the enemy; others tried stones and clubs but without success. The line was still unbroken. "We must break their ranks," said the leader, "or our country will be lost."

A poor man named Arnold Winkelried then stepped forth. He had a happy home on the mountain side, and a wife and family that he loved very dearly. But he determined to give his life to save his country. Calling upon his comrades to follow him, he rushed into the very centre of the lines. A hundred spears were turned to catch him on their points. The soldiers forgot to stay in their places and the lines were broken. The Swiss army pressed through the gap. They seized the weapons of the invaders and overpowered them in one mad rush. They fought as men who knew no fear, for they thought only of their country and their homes.

Such a battle was never known before. Switzerland was saved and Arnold Winkelried did not die in vain.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE.

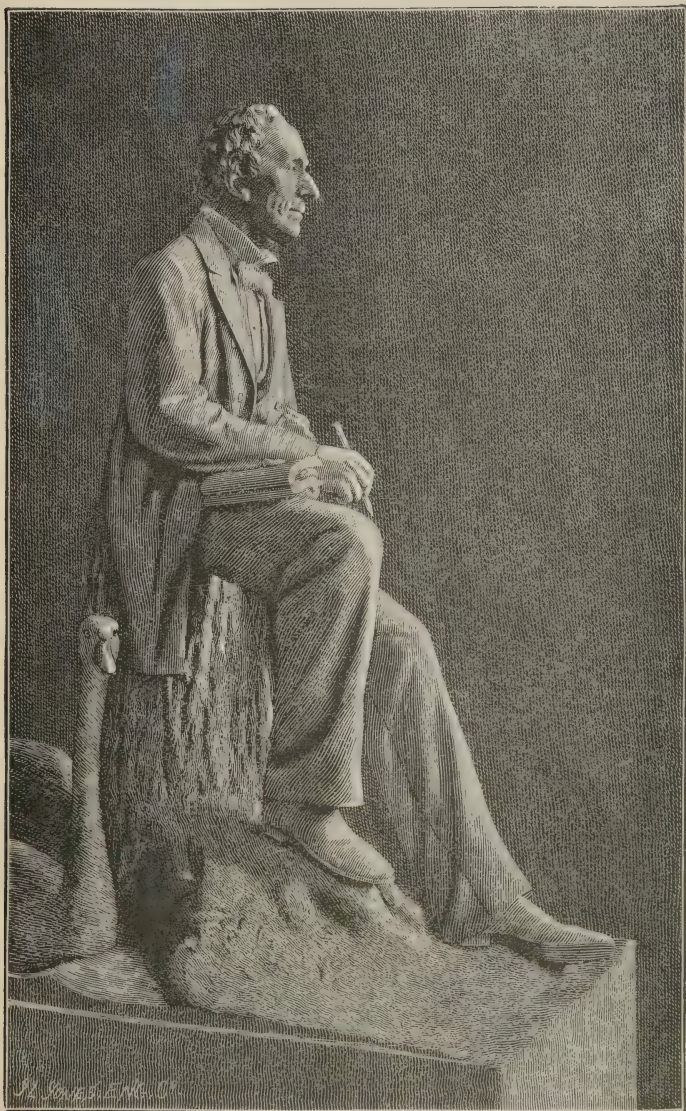
Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat ?
Come hither, come hither, come hither ;
Here shall we see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live in the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets ?
Come hither, come hither, come hither ;
Here shall we see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

THE SNOW MAN.

PART I.

"It is so nice and cold," said the snow man,
"that it makes my whole body crackle. This is
just the kind of wind to put life into one. How
that great red thing up there is staring at me."
He meant the sun, which was just setting.
"But he shall not make me wink. I shall
stand fast."



HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

Photograph from Statue.

He had two large three-cornered pieces of slate in his head instead of eyes; his mouth was a bit of an old rake, so that he had good, strong teeth. He had been born amid the merry shouts of boys, the tinkling of sleigh-bells, and the cracking of whips.

The sun went down, and the full moon rose, large and round and bright, in the deep blue sky. The snow man thought it was the sun rising again. "There he comes again from the other side," said he. "But I have cured him of staring. He may hang there now and shine as long as he likes, so that I may be able to see about me.

"I only wish I knew how to move about from place to place as people do. I should so like to move. If I could I would slide on the ice, as I have seen the boys do, but I do not know how to run."

"Bow-wow!" barked the old watch-dog. He was very hoarse. He had once been kept in the house, and lay by the fire, and he had been hoarse ever since. "The sun will teach you to run fast enough. Did I not see him—last year's snow man—run? Yes; and many another before him. Bow-wow! He will soon make you run."

"I don't know what you mean, comrade," said the snow man. "Will that thing up yonder

teach me to run? I know he can run, for he ran fast enough a little while ago when I looked at him, and now he comes creeping up the other side."

"You don't know anything," said the watch-dog; "but no wonder, when you have only just been made. The thing you see up yonder just now is the moon, and what you saw before it was the sun. He will come again to-morrow morning, and will very likely teach you to run down into the ditch; for I think the weather is going to change. I feel it in my bones. There is sure to be a change."

"I can't make out what he is talking about," said the snow man to himself, "but I feel it is about something not at all pleasant. The thing which stared at me so, and then went out of sight, and which he calls the sun, is not my friend; I can feel that too."

"Bow-wow!" barked the watch-dog, and then he turned round three times and lay down in his house to sleep.

The change in the weather that he had spoken about really came. Next morning a thick, wet fog covered the whole country, and a sharp, icy wind arose which seemed to freeze one's very bones; but when the sun got up the sight was beautiful.

All the trees and bushes were covered with hoar-frost, and looked like a forest of white coral, or as though every branch was covered with sparkling gems. All the little twigs too, that cannot be seen in summer for the leaves, now stood out clearly, looking like fine, white lace-work. Every bough glittered with a clear, bright light. The birch, waving in the wind, seemed as much alive as in summer-time; and when the sun shone, everything sparkled as if diamond dust had been strewn about.

PART II.

“This is really beautiful,” said a young girl who had come into the garden with a young man, and they both stood still near the snow man to look at the fairy-like scene. “Why, summer can show us nothing lovelier than this,” she added, and her eyes sparkled.

“And we can’t have a fellow like that in summer,” replied the young man, pointing to the snow man. “He is capital.”

The girl laughed, nodded her head at the snow man, and then tripped away over the snow with her friend. The snow creaked and crackled under their feet as if they had been walking on starch.

“Who are those two?” asked the snow man of the watch-dog. “You are older than I am. Do you know them?”

“Of course I do,” said the watch-dog. “She has often patted me on the back, and he has given me bones. I never bite those two.”

“But who are they?” again asked the snow man.

“They are lovers,” replied the watch-dog. “They will go and live in the same kennel and gnaw at the same bone by-and-by.”

“Are they as great people as you and I?” asked the snow man.

“Well, they belong to the same master,” said the dog. “It is strange how little people know who were born only yesterday. But I have age, and I know every one about here; and there was once a time when I did not stand out here chained in the cold. Bow-wow!”

“The cold is splendid,” said the snow man. “But do tell me, tell me; only don’t rattle your chain so, for it makes me crack all through when you do that.”

“Bow-wow!” barked the watch-dog. “When I was a puppy they called me a pretty little fellow. I lay on a velvet chair up in the master’s house, and sometimes sat in my mis-

tress's lap. They used to kiss me, and to wipe my paws with a scented handkerchief. But after a while I grew too big for them, and then they sent me down to the kitchen. You can see it from where you stand.

"It is not such a fine place as the room upstairs; but I was more comfortable in it, for I was not always being taken hold of and pulled about by the children as I had been. Besides, I had plenty of good things to eat, and I had my own cushion. And then there was the stove. It is the finest thing in the world at this time of the year. I used to creep right under it. Oh, I dream of that stove still! Bow-wow!"

"Is a stove so beautiful?" asked the snow man. "Is it like me?"

"It is just the opposite of you; it is as black as coal, and has a long neck and brass knobs. It eats burning wood, so that fire comes out of its mouth. Oh, it is so fine to keep close by its side, or to get right under it! You can see it through the window from where you stand."

Then the snow man looked, and saw a black shining thing with brass knobs and fire gleaming from the lower part of it. And as he looked, a strange feeling came over him that he had never felt before, and could not tell the meaning of.

But men who are not made of snow know what it means well enough.

“And why did you leave her?” asked the snow man, for he felt that the stove must be of the female sex. “How could you come away from such a place?”

“I had to leave,” replied the watch-dog. “They turned me out and chained me up here. I bit one of the boys in the leg because he kicked away the bone I was gnawing. ‘Bone for bone,’ thought I; but they were so angry that from that time I have been tied up here, and have lost my voice. Don’t you hear how hoarse I am? Bow-wow; that’s the end of it all.”

PART III.

The snow man did not wish to hear any more. He was gazing into the housekeeper’s room on the lower storey, where the stove stood on its four iron legs, looking about the same size as himself.

“Oh, how strangely I feel,” he said. “Shall I ever get in there? It is my only wish, and I must go in and stand beside her, even if I have to break the window on my way.”

“You must never go in there,” said the watch-dog. “If you did get near the stove, it would soon be all over with you. Bow-wow!”

“I think it is all over with me as it is,” said the snow man. “I believe I am breaking to pieces.”

All day the snow man stood staring in through the window. And in the twilight the room looked still more pleasant; for a gentle glow came from the stove not like sunlight, nor moonlight either—no, only the warmth which comes from a stove when it is well fed. Every now and then, when the door of the stove was opened, a bright flame leaped up, and its red light shone on the snow man’s white face and breast.

“I can bear this no longer,” said he. “How beautiful she looks when she puts out her tongue!” The night was long, but it did not seem long to the snow man. A sharp frost set in, and by the morning all the windows were covered with the loveliest frost flowers that any snow man could wish to see.

But alas! they hid the stove from his sight. The panes would not thaw, and he could not see her. It was just the kind of weather that should have pleased the snow man, but he was not pleased. He ought to have been happy, but he was not; he longed so much for the stove.

“That is a bad complaint for a snow man,” said the watch-dog. “I know what it is, for I had it myself. But I got over it. Bow-wow!

Now we are going to have a change in the weather."

The weather did change; it began to thaw. As the thaw went on the snow man went off. He said nothing; he only pined and wasted away. One morning he broke and fell down altogether.

Something like a broomstick stuck up in the place where the boys had built him. "Now I know the meaning of it all," said the watch-dog. "The snow man had a stove poker in his inside. That is why he had such a great longing for the stove. But it is all over now. Bow-wow!"

And now came the end of the winter. "Bow-wow!" barked the watch-dog; but the little girls of the house danced about in the sunshine singing, and nobody thought any more of the snow man.

OUR ALMANAC.

Robins in the tree-tops,
Blossoms in the grass;
Green things a-growing
Everywhere you pass;
Sudden little breezes;
Showers of silver dew;
Black bough and bent twig
Budding out anew!

Pine tree and willow tree,
Fringed elm, and larch,
Don't you think that May-time's
Pleasanter than March ?

Apples in the orchard,
Mellowing one by one ;
Strawberries upturning
Soft cheeks to the sun ;
Roses, faint with sweetness ;
Lilies, fair of face ;
Drowsy scents and murmurs
Haunting every place ;
Lengths of golden sunshine ;
Moonlight bright as day—
Don't you think that Summer's
Pleasanter than May ?

Roger in the corn-patch,
Whistling negro songs ;
Pussy by the hearth-side,
Romping with the tongs ;
Chestnuts in the ashes,
Bursting through the rind ;
Red-leaf and gold-leaf,
Rustling down the wind ;
Mother "doin' peaches"
All the afternoon—
Don't you think that Autumn's
Pleasanter than June ?

Little fairy snow-flakes,
Dancing in the flue :
Old Mr. Santa Claus,
What is keeping you ?
Twilight and firelight ;
Shadows come and go ;
Merry chime of sleigh-bells,
Tinkling through the snow ;
Mother knitting stockings,
(Pussy has the ball !)—
Don't you think that Winter's
Pleasanter than all ?

THE STORY OF DICK WHITTINGTON.

In the reign of King Edward the Third, there lived in a small English village a poor couple, named Whittington, who had a son called Dick. His parents dying when he was very young, he could scarcely remember them at all ; and as he was not old enough to work, he was for a long time badly off, until a kind but poor old woman took pity on him, and made her cottage his home.

She always gave him good advice ; and as he was hard-working and well-behaved, he became quite a favorite in the village. When he was fourteen years old, and had grown up to be a stout, good-looking youth, the good old woman died, and he had to look out how to earn his living by his own efforts. Now Dick was bright

and intelligent, and fond of gaining knowledge by asking questions of everybody who could tell him something useful. In this way he had heard much about the wonderful city of London; more, indeed, than was true, for the country-folks were fond of talking of it as a place where the streets were paved with gold. This arose from their ignorance, for very few indeed amongst them had ever seen it. Although Dick was not so foolish as to believe this nonsense, yet he felt very curious to go to London and see it with his own eyes, hoping that in so great and wealthy a place he should get on better than he could in a poor country village.

One fine summer morning, therefore, he boldly started on his journey, with but a trifle of money in his pocket. When he had walked on for some hours, he felt very tired, and was rather alarmed at the thought of the distance he had to travel. While he was thinking about this, he heard the wheels of a heavy waggon on its way to London, slowly coming along the road behind him. This rough sound was like music to his ears, weary as he then was. As soon as the waggoner came up, Dick without much ado told him his plan, and begged that he might have a lift until his legs were rested enough to let him walk again. This the man agreed to do, and so, partly by riding,

and partly by walking side by side with the waggoner, Dick managed to reach the great city he was so anxious to behold.

Though Dick's heart beat with joy on finding himself really in London, he was not quite pleased with the look of the streets and houses. He had fancied to himself a grander and richer place than the city seemed to him at first sight to be. But this is a very common kind of mistake—indeed, we all of us make it sometimes; in our fancy, everything we have yet to see appears only on its bright side, but in reality everything has its dark side as well. Dick soon found out this truth for himself, as we shall see presently.

After Dick had parted with the friendly waggoner, he had only a groat left out of his little store of money; a night's lodging, and a scanty meal or two soon exhausted this, and after wandering about for a whole day, he felt so weary and faint from fatigue and hunger, that he threw himself down on the steps of a doorway, and resting his head on this hard pillow, slept soundly until morning. Not knowing what to do, he walked on farther, and looking about him, his eye fell on a strange-looking knocker on the door of a large house, just like the face of a black monkey grinning. He could not help grin-

ning too, and then he thought there could be no great harm if he lifted the knocker and waited to see who should appear. Now, the house stood in a busy part of London, and belonged to a merchant named Fitzwarren. It was the cook, a sour-looking, ill-tempered woman, who opened the door. When she saw it was a poor, ill-dressed, country lad, who had disturbed her at breakfast, she began to abuse him roughly, and to order him away. Luckily for Dick, Mr. Fitzwarren, who was a kind, polite gentleman, came up to the door at this moment, and listened carefully to the poor boy's story; and so much struck was he with his truthful aspect and simple language, that he kindly ordered Dick to be taken into the house and cared for, until he should be able to get his living in some decent way.

Alice, the merchant's daughter, who had overheard all this, and well knowing the unfeeling nature of the cook, did all she could to save Dick from harsh treatment. Her own kindness of heart made her feel for the distress of the poor orphan boy, and she tried her best to make her parents take some interest in his welfare. She succeeded so far that they agreed Dick should remain in the house if he could make himself useful by assisting the cook and the

other servants. This, however, was not a very easy matter, for the cook disliked the boy from the first, and did all she could to spite him. Amongst her other acts of cruelty, she made him sleep on a wretched hard bed placed in an old loft, sadly infested with rats and mice. Dick dared not complain; and besides, he did not like to make mischief; so he bore with his trouble as long as he could, and resolved at length, when he should have money enough, to buy himself a cat. Now, it happened that, within a very few days from this, a poor woman, passing by the door while he was cleaning it, offered to sell him a cat, and when she heard his story, let him have it for a penny.

Dick took his prize up to his loft, and there kept pussy in an old wicker basket, with a cover to it, to be out of the cook's sight, as he feared she would do the cat a mischief if she found her straying about. Now and then he would take pussy with him when he went out on errands, so that they soon became great friends. Not only was pussy a capital mouser, and very soon got rid of his nightly visitors, the rats and mice, but she was very clever and quick in learning many diverting tricks that her master tried to make her perform. One day, when Dick was amusing himself with her antics, he was surprised by his

young mistress, Alice, who became afterwards almost as fond of the cat as Dick was himself.

This young lady always remained the poor lad's friend, and this cheered him up under the cruel usage he received from the cook, who sometimes beat him severely. Alice was not beautiful in person, but what was of greater real value to her, she was truly amiable in temper, and had the most pleasing manners. It was no wonder, then, that Whittington, smarting under the ill-treatment of the coarse cook-maid, should regard his kind young mistress as nothing less than an angel; whilst the modesty of the youth, his correct conduct, his respectful bearing, and his love of truth interested Alice so much in his behalf, that she persuaded her father to let one of the young men teach him to write, for he could already read very well; and the progress he made in this, and in acquiring further knowledge, was a matter of surprise to all.

Mr. Fitzwarren, as we have said, was a merchant; and it was his custom, whenever one of his ships went out, to call his family and servants around him, and ask them all in turn to make a little venture, according to their wishes or power, under the special charge of the captain. Poor Whittington was the only one absent when this next happened; he, poor fellow, felt ashamed

that he possessed nothing of value to send as his venture. But he was called for, and told that he must produce something—no matter what—to try his luck. The poor youth then burst into tears, from very vexation and shame, when his kind friend Alice whispered in his ear, “Send your cat, Dick;” and forthwith he was ordered to take Pussy, his faithful friend and companion, on board, and place her in the hands of the captain. His young mistress, however, took good care to make the mouser’s capital qualities known to the captain, so that he might make the most of her for Dick’s benefit.

After the loss of his cat Dick felt rather sorrowful, and this was not made less by the taunts and jeers of his old enemy, the cook, who used to tease him constantly about his “fine venture,” and the great fortune he was to make by it. Poor fellow! she led him a wretched life; and as his young mistress, besides, was soon after absent from home on a visit, he lost heart entirely, and could no longer bear to live in the same house with his tormentor.

In this gloomy state of mind, he resolved to quit Mr. Fitzwarren’s house, and he started off one morning very early, unnoticed by any one, and wandered some distance out of town. Tired and wretched, he flung himself upon a large stone

by the roadside, which from his having rested himself upon it is called Whittington's Stone to this day. He presently sank into a sort of doze, from which he was roused by the sound of Bow Bells ringing a merry peal. As he listened to them, he fancied he could make out the following words, addressed to himself, and the more he listened, the plainer the bells seemed to chant them to his ear :

“Turn again, Whittington,
Lord Mayor of London.”

A new spirit of hope was awakened within him, as he kept repeating these words after the bells, for they inspired him with great thoughts. So distinctly did they appear to be addressed to him, that he was resolved to bear any hardships rather than check his way to fortune by idle repining. So he made the best of his way home again, and, late in the morning as it was, he luckily got into the house without his absence having been noticed. Like a brave-hearted boy, he exerted himself now more than ever to make himself useful, above all to his worthy master and his kind young mistress, and he succeeded beyond his hopes ; almost everybody saw that he was desirous to do his duty, and to excel in all he tried to do. Alice was more and more satisfied with his conduct, and heard with pleasure of

the great progress he was making in his studies. But the cook continued as surly as ever, although she must have seen he no longer minded her ill-temper as he used to do.

While matters were thus going on at home, Mr. Fitzwarren's ship, the *Unicorn*, was slowly pursuing her voyage to a distant part of Africa. In those days the art of sailing was but little known, and much greater dangers were incurred through ignorance in steering vessels than is now the case. The *Unicorn* was unlucky enough to meet with much foul weather, and was so tossed about that she lost her course; but what was worse, owing to her being so long away from any port, her provisions were nearly all gone, and every one on board began to despair of their ever returning to England. It was wonderful that, all through this dreadful period of suffering, Whittington's cat should have been kept alive and well; but so it was, and this no doubt was owing to the great care taken of her by the captain himself, who had not forgotten the interest Alice had expressed to him about the cat. Not only was pussy by this means kept alive, but she contrived to bring up a little family of kittens; their funny tricks greatly diverted the sailors, and helped to keep them in good humor when they began to feel discontented.

At length, when the last biscuit had been eaten, and nothing but death seemed to be in store for the poor sailors, they were rejoiced to find that their prayers to Heaven for aid had been heard ; for when day broke, land was seen. This proved to be a kingdom on the African coast, abounding with wealth. The people who lived there were black, but they were kind, and much pleased to be visited by the ships of white men, for the cruel slave-trade had not then been heard of among them. The king, as soon as he was told of the arrival of the *Unicorn*, sent some of his great men to invite the captain and a few of his companions to visit his court, and to have the honor of dining with him and his queen.

A grand dinner, in the fashion of the country, was provided for the occasion ; and great good humor prevailed until the dishes were placed on the table, when the white visitors were astonished at the appearance of rats and mice in vast numbers, which came from their hiding-places and devoured nearly all the viands in a very short time. The king and queen seemed to regard this as no uncommon event, although they felt ashamed it should occur on this occasion.

When the captain found, on making enquiry, that there was no such animal as a cat known in

the country, he all at once thought of asking leave to introduce Whittington's cat at court, feeling convinced that puss would soon get rid of the abominable rats and mice that infested the place. The royal pair and the whole court listened to the captain's account of the cat's good qualities as a mouser with wonder and delight, and were eager to see her talents put to the proof. Puss was taken ashore in her wicker basket. A fresh repast was prepared, and was about to be attacked in a similar way, when she sprang in a moment among the crowd of rats and mice, killing several, and putting the rest to flight in less than the space of a minute.

Nothing could exceed the joy caused by this event. The king and queen and all their people knew not how to make enough of puss, and they became more and more fond of her when they found how gentle and playful she could be with them, although so fierce in battling with rats and mice. As might be expected, the captain was much pressed to leave this valuable cat with his black friends, and he, thinking that they would no doubt make a right royal return for so precious a gift, readily acceded to the request. The queen's attachment to puss seemed to know no bounds, and she felt great alarm lest any accident should befall her, fearing that in

that case, the odious rats and mice would return, more savage than ever. The captain comforted her greatly, however, by telling her that pussy had a young family of kittens on board, which should also be duly presented at court.

Now the queen had a tender heart, and when she had heard from the captain all the particulars of Whittington's story, and of the poor lad's great regret at parting with his cat, she felt quite sorry to deprive him of his favorite; the more so since pussy's kittens were found to be quite able to frighten away the rats and mice. So the cat was replaced in her wicker basket and taken on board again. The gratitude of the king and queen for the important services rendered by pussy and her family was shown by the rich treasures they sent to Whittington, as the owner of the wonderful cat.

The captain, having at last completed his business, and got ready his ship as well as he could, took leave of his African friends, and set sail for England; and after a very long absence, during which Mr. Fitzwarren had given up the ship for lost, she safely arrived in the port of London. When the captain called upon the merchant, the latter was much affected at again seeing so valued a friend restored to him, whom he regarded as lost. The ladies also, who were

present, wept for joy, and were very curious to hear of the perils encountered and the strange sights witnessed by the captain. Alice, in particular, wanted to know without delay what had befallen Dick's cat and what was the success of his venture. When the captain had explained all that had happened, he added that Whittington ought to be told of the result of his venture very carefully, otherwise his good luck might make him lose his wits. But Mr. Fitzwarren would hear of no delay, and had him sent for at once.

Poor Dick at that moment had just been basted by the cook with a ladle of dripping, and was quite ashamed to appear in such a plight before company. But all his woes were soon forgotten when the worthy merchant told him of his good fortune, and added that it was a just reward granted by Heaven for his patience under hard trials, and for his good conduct and industry. When the boxes and bales containing the treasures given by the African king and queen to the owner of the cat, and marked outside with a large W, were displayed before the astonished youth, he burst into tears, and implored his master to take all, if he would but continue to be his friend. But the merchant would touch none of it, declaring it belonged

to Whittington, and to him alone. Before the captain took his leave, he said to Dick playfully, "I have another present for you from the African queen," and calling to a sailor below, ordered him to bring up the wicker-basket, out of which leaped Mrs. Puss, to the great joy of her former master; and right happy was she to see him again, purring round him, and rubbing her head against his face when he took her up in his arms. For the rest of her days she continued to live with her grateful master.

Dick made a liberal and proper use of his wealth, rewarding all who had been in any way kind to him; nor did he even omit his old enemy, the cook. Mr. Fitzwarren constantly refused Whittington's earnest wishes that he would accept at least some of his great wealth, but he agreed to become his guardian and manager of his property until he should be of age. Under his prudent counsel, Whittington grew up to be a thriving merchant, and a wise and good citizen.

On coming of age, he sought for and won the hand of Alice, who had been his helper and friend in all his trials.

Whittington rose in importance every year, and was much esteemed by all persons. He

served in Parliament, was knighted also, and was thrice Lord Mayor of London—thus fulfilling the prophecy uttered, as he had fancied, by Bow Bells. When he served that office for the third time, it was during the reign of Harry the Fifth, just after that great king had conquered France. Sir Richard gave a feast to him and his queen in such great style, that the king was pleased to say, “Never prince had such a subject!” to which it has been said the Lord Mayor loyally replied, “Never subject had such a prince!” At this feast the king was much pleased with a fire made from choice woods and fragrant spices, upon which Sir Richard said that he would add something that would make the fire burn more brightly, for the pleasure of his king; when he threw into the flames many bonds given by the king for money borrowed of the citizens to carry on the war with France, and which Sir Richard had called in and paid to the amount of sixty thousand pounds.

After a long life, this good man, who made himself much loved by his noble public works and acts of charity, for many of which he is still kept in memory, died, greatly to the sorrow of every one, having survived Alice, his wife, about twenty years.

